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Uniting*Care* Queensland: Challenges of authenticity and congruity.

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Centre for Social Change Research

HH50, Doctor of Social Science
Project 1
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Statement of original authorship

The work contained in this essay has not been previously been submitted to meet requirements for an award at this or any other higher education institution. To the best of my knowledge and belief, the essay contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made.

Signature

Date

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Chapter 1: Introduction

The scope of this research

This essay is the first of three written to share the research work I have undertaken to explore the relationship between the Uniting Church in Australia, Queensland Synod (UCA), and its human service work in Uniting*Care* Queensland (UCQ). Although the UCA and UCQ are connected, they have grown and developed in different ways. This difference in development has created questions as to the authenticity and congruity of UCQ as a missional expression of the UCA. Three broad topics for my research projects have emerged: organisational structure and governance, leadership and ethical decision-making processes.

Organisational structure and governance is the first area of inquiry because there is a structural difference between the UCA and UCQ. The UCA is a Christian church (a theocratic community) and has a flat structure of interrelated councils, as set out in the *Basis of Union*. UCQ has a hierarchical structure. This project will focus on the challenges of authenticity and congruity for UCQ. Subsequent projects will focus on authentic leadership and ethical decision-making processes.

The UCA and UCQ will benefit from these inquiries by having a deeper understanding of the ethical dimensions and significance of structure, governance, leadership and decision-making as it applies to each group and in the relationship between the UCA and the mission-driven human services of UCQ.

In addition, I will benefit from these inquiries knowing that I have lived up to my calling as a Chaplain who works at the interface of the Church and its human service work. My hope is to make a contribution to the well being of both the multitude of fine workers in UCQ who deserve the best work environments possible and the satisfaction of a job well done, and the

recipients of services who often experience vulnerability. If this research can contribute to the well being of both employees and the people being served, I will be satisfied.

The scope of this essay

This essay begins with a disclosure of how I am embedded in this research. Harrison (2003, p. 8) in a critique of his own use of traditional ethnography realised that he was unable to occupy the position of anyone except himself. As researcher, he was the one who decided the extent of the literature review, the questions, the method and the interpretation. This is also a concern for this research, because I am embedded in the organisations, which are being researched. As a chaplain I am placed by the UCA to work in UCQ. One of the remedies is part of the method, whereby I declare my hermeneutic, my presuppositions and assumptions as part of the research.

Brooker, Macpherson and Aspland (2001), in a discussion on action research for teachers, recommended the use of a critical friend network to act as a check and balance to guard against undisclosed bias. Whilst this could be a helpful research methodology, there may be issues of confidentiality when working in human services. Salner (1999) observed that self deception was a major threat to valid qualitative research. Her final conclusion was that “the relationship between self-reflexivity and self-deception points in the direction of collaboration as essential to validation” (Salner,1999, p. last para.). Hence the role of academic supervision (two from QUT and one from the UCA) has provided that essential opportunity for critical reflexivity to validate the research method and to moderate my bias.

Another issue may be the political impact that this research will have on the UCA and UCQ. There may be a mixed reaction to the possibility of change, ranging from direct opposition to open acceptance. A further complication is that UCQ is undergoing change in governance and leadership styles in some

areas. This shifting social context means that the research will not be able to keep up with the latest manifestation of change, but will of necessity have to be retrospective from a chosen date. For this project that date was February 2006.

Throughout this essay I have tried to maintain a distinction between the “Church” with a capital as the Uniting Church in Australia, and the “church” without a capital to signify the broader church of unspecified denomination. A further distinction that I have made is to use “UCA” to apply only to the Uniting Church in Australia, Queensland Synod.

This essay seeks to explore the challenges that UCQ faces with respect to its authenticity and congruities. UCQ is embedded in the UCA, therefore an exploration of the identity of the UCA is carried out in chapter one. From this foundation the identity of UCQ can be explored in chapter two. Because UCQ is in a working relationship with many stakeholders, which creates turbidity of identity; chapter three explores the congruity between UCQ and the UCA. Finally, chapter four explores four possible options of organisational structure, to discern for a way forward together for UCQ and the UCA, to meet the challenges of delivering church-sponsored community services authentically and congruently.

How I am embedded in this research

I am a minister of religion in the Uniting Church in Australia, Queensland Synod (UCA) who works as a Chaplain in UnitingCare Queensland (UCQ). I am embedded in this research.

I have been a part of the church all my life. My father was a Presbyterian minister who became part of the UCA when it was formed in 1977. My history and my context was the Presbyterian Church. At the age of seventeen I decided to follow Jesus and became swept up by the Jesus movement of the early nineteen-seventies in Brisbane. I was introduced to charismatic renewal,

and social responsibility. I married Jayne in 1977, the same year that the Uniting Church in Ausrtalia started. One year later I gave up a cadetship in Medical Laboratory Science to work with Jayne for the UCA, through Special Caring Services Division, as a houseparent with five children with intellectual disability. This was about putting faith into practice.

Four years and two children later we moved, to be part of a rural Christian community. It was a disaster. After six months we left and moved to Gympie and became involved with the UCA there. By the time our fourth child turned two, we were ready to sever our links with the church. I was working in a pathology laboratory and studying as an external student to complete a medical science degree. Jayne was raising four children and studying for her arts degree. We were building a mud-brick, pole-frame house. We were busy, but our experience of church had become dry and abusive.

The breakthrough came when Jayne went to a Christian feminist conference in Melbourne called “The Church made Whole.” This was like a second conversion experience. I began to hear perspectives that embraced the whole person, perspectives that challenged how power is used in personal relationships and in church relationships; perspectives that took history and context and interpretation seriously. I learned new words like “hermeneutics” and “hegemony” and “patriarchy”. I began to read Chaos and Complexity theory (Gleick, 1987; Hall, 1992), and the work of Charles Birch (1990) and Walter Brueggemann (1978). The old Newtonian worldview of a clockwork universe gave way to the dynamic worldview of quantum physics and the embrace of uncertainty and diversity, in the constant presence of the divine.

I decided to candidate for training as a minister in the UCA and began a Bachelor of Theology in 1993. My quest has been to be authentic about being Christian in the world, in relationship with people. Since ordination as a Minister of the Word at the end of 1996, the exploration and struggle for authenticity has continued.

In 1997 I began work as a Chaplain in an organisation that is a missional expression of the UCA. UCQ described itself as the community service arm of the UCA in Queensland (Uniting*Care* Queensland, 2005). UCQ is comprised of Blue Care, Lifeline Community Care, Uniting Health Care and Crossroads. All of these activities began decades ago due to the faithfulness of committed Christian people and came into the UCA as a legacy from the Methodist, Presbyterian and Congregationalist churches at the time of union in 1977.

The people who began these community services were embedded in their time and place and established practices coherent for their time. These fledging ministries grew and changed into the large organisations that employ 14500 people today and engage in practices that are coherent for today.
UCQ is embedded in the UCA. The Uniting Church in Australia is embedded in the Christian faith, which is embedded in the person of Jesus. I am embedded in my belief in Jesus, which is expressed in my being a member of the UCA and working in UCQ.

The central question that I keep coming back to is that, although UCQ has adopted rational and secular management practices, are these practices congruent with the UCA and its reasons for being? If not, are there alternative practices that are congruent with the UCA? My concern is that if the structures and governance practices of the UCA and UCQ are incongruent, then the mission of the UCA would be compromised, the message of reconciliation, of faith, hope and love would become empty rhetoric, and ultimately, the UCA would become “a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal” (1 Corinthians 13:1).

Authenticity and congruity

I want to make a distinction between authenticity and congruity. In this essay “authenticity” will mean the coherence of beliefs, values and actions within a particular organisation, and “congruity” will refer to the consistency of the relationship between two or more organisations’ values and actions. This

distinction is necessary because the UCA and UCQ are two different organisations, even though they are connected. The staff of UCQ will have a greater diversity of beliefs than the members of the UCA. UCQ will employ any person who is willing to work within the ethos of the UCA. Hence, paid and volunteer staff are not expected to share all the beliefs of the UCA, rather they are asked to work together with shared values and consistent action, for a particular outcome.

Fundamental to these questions are two underlying considerations. For the UCA to be authentic, that is, to be true to its self, implies that the UCA has a clear idea about its identity. Hence the question of identity precedes the question of authenticity.

Three working assumptions

To begin to answer these questions the following assumptions were made.
The first assumption is that the UCA would want a clear link made between the work of UCQ and the Church's beliefs. The second assumption is that this theological exploration is based on the foundation of faith. A faith which is based on the witness of the millennia through the stories of people's relationship with God in the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures and based on personal experience of the presence of God in the present.

The third assumption is that the Bible is accepted as "unique prophetic and apostolic testimony, in which the Church hears the Word of God and by which its faith and obedience are nourished and regulated." (Basis of Union, 1977, para. 5). This does not mean that the stories of the Bible are all literally true, rather the Bible can be seen as the theologised narrative of ancient peoples and their relationship with the divine (Finkelstein and Silberman, 2001).

The implications of this are that the Bible ought not be used as a moral code, nor as a scientific thesis; rather readers are invited to enter into the spirit of

the text, and to receive the message as guidance after due consideration and reflection on socio-historical context of Biblical texts, the literary genre, consistency with other Biblical texts, theological themes, relationship with the tradition, and the understandings of modern scholarship.

Summary

Because UCQ is embedded in the UCA, the identity of UCQ is informed by the identity of the UCA. Therefore, chapter two of this essay will begin with an exploration of the identity of the UCA. Chapter three will explore the authenticity of UCQ as a provider of church-sponsored human services. Chapter four will examine the congruity of the relationship between UCQ and the UCA, with a particular focus on structure and governance. Chapter five will discuss possible ways forward for the ethical journey of UCQ with the UCA.

Chapter 2: The identity of the Uniting Church in Australia (UCA)

The UCA is fortunate to have worked on the question of identity with the antecedent Churches for several decades prior to union in 1977. A significant product of years of discussion and debate was the document called the Basis of Union. The Basis of Union is the foundational document of the UCA.

The formation of the Basis of Union and the UCA

The Basis of Union does two things. Firstly it describes the basis on which the Presbyterian and Methodist and Congregational churches might form a Uniting Church. Secondly, the Basis of Union is a Schedule attached to the Uniting Church in Australia Act 1977 (Queensland Government, 1996), which inaugurated the Uniting Church in Australia and constituted the Uniting Church in Australia Property Trust (Q) as a legal entity. Despite the quasi-legal role that the Basis of Union plays, this document is surprisingly relevant and visionary.

The Basis of Union was intended to be a confession of faith with a "sevenfold commitment" (Davis McCaughey,1978, pp. 5- 7). The primary commitment was the centrality of Jesus Christ and his message, around which the other six commitments revolve. These commitments give rise to "the language of worship, … the language of allegiance, …the language of systematic thought and doctrine, …the language of obedience, …of worship witness and service" culminating in our "Christian language" as we "take counsel together".

"So, the Church's message, the Church's structure and the Church's mission are determined by the free act of God's grace in Jesus Christ. By this gospel of grace the Church lives, to turn from it is to die" (McCaughey, 1978, p. 44).

In addition there is an acknowledgement that “Faith may be held by erring men (sic) within time and history”, however “Our commitment is made in faith, …love, and …hope.” (McCaughey, 1978, pp. 42- 45). The trilogy of faith, hope and love is an echo of the Apostle Paul (1 Corinthians 13: 13) and indicates the apostolic connectivity of the Uniting Church in Australia with the church universal reaching back in time to the early church of the first century in the common era. The Uniting Church in Australia is a Reformed Church, which is a branch of the Protestant Church, which grew out of the Roman Catholic Church, which split with the Eastern Orthodox Churches, which altogether are part of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church in the world.

The significance of the Basis of Union

The Basis of Union continues to be a significant document in the life of the Uniting Church in Australia. The importance of the Basis of Union was reaffirmed by the Eighth Assembly in 1977 (Bos, 2003, p. 56). Robert Bos (2003) recounted the 1998 protest of twelve of the fourteen members of the Joint Commission, who challenged an Assembly decision because it was not consistent with the Basis of Union. The events surrounding the protest seem to have clarified the ways in which different people use the Basis of Union. The Basis of Union is the primary document which was voted on prior to union. The Constitution which legally constitutes the Uniting Church in Australia is secondary to the Basis of Union, and the Regulations are derived from the Constitution. In practice and in general, theologians seem to appeal to the Basis of Union, lawyers seem to appeal to the Constitution, and bureaucrats seem to appeal to the Regulations. Dutney (1986, p. 125) summarised paragraph 17 of the Basis of Union which speaks of the relationship between Church law and the gospel by concluding that “the gospel must continually be ringing in the lawyer’s ears.”

In summary, the UCA is a faith community whose message, structure and mission are grounded in, and determined by, the person of Jesus the Christ.

Hence, message, structure and mission are inextricably linked and need to be understood as being as interrelated. However the dialogue between these epistemes is not relativistic, but secondary, because they are ontologically bound to the person of Jesus the Christ. (The Joint Commission. 1978, p. 43)

This summary raises at least three questions: What is the message? What is the structure? and What is the mission? These questions are asked in the context of faith.

The context of faith

Faith is not a passive or static way of being; rather it is a dynamic, confident hope (Hebrews 11:1). Dicker (1996, p. 10- 15) argues that when faith seeks understanding, believers are doing theology. Sources of theological reflection include experience and praxis, reason and imagination, culture and language in dialogue with tradition and scripture. The Joint Commission (1978, p. 29) in its discussions about the faith of the Church seemed to want to move away from a merely psychological, sociological or philosophical approach to theology by declaring, “too much traditional theology has removed God’s controversy with his (sic) people and has put in its place the controversy of the people amongst themselves.”

According to Dutney (1986, p. 17), the Joint Commission adopted a “critical methodology “to their work, where they not only acknowledged the derivative nature of historical creeds and confessions due to the limitations of time, place and culture; but were prepared to critique the tradition also. They sought to be radical and apostolic by declaring,

> No system of Church government, no rules or precedents, no system of doctrine or ethics, no technique of evangelism, no tradition of men regarding the ordering of worship, is sufficiently free from error to be permitted to hold anything but a subordinate position in the life of the Christian Church (The Joint Commission, 1978, p. 43).

The work of the Joint Commission was not to amalgamate the three denominations into a united one, rather their vision was to start on the "primary ground of the Church's existence, which was God's justifying act in Jesus Christ, apprehended in the Church by faith" (The Joint Commission, 1978, p. 43) and to articulate that vision for a new church that was in the process of becoming, a church open to renewal in faith and mission, a church on the way to a promised end (Dutney, 1986, p. 120).

The Joint Commission (1978, p. 28- 29), when it was established in 1957, envisaged an Australian church which was a part of Asia and the Pacific, rather than British or European or American. The Joint Commission was strongly informed by the World Council of Churches and the ecumenical movement. They were theologically influenced by Karl Barth, the Barmen Declaration and the Third World Conference on Faith and Order meeting at Lund 1952 (Dutney, 1986, pp. 13, 18, 21). As the Joint Commission deliberated the uniting churches experienced a wave of secularisation, the God is dead movement in the wake of the philosophy of Nietzsche and Heidegger. Gianni Vattimo (2002) asserted that the God who died in the 1960's needed to die. Nietzsche and Heidegger's critique of Christian metaphysics had opened the door for the church to re-engage with the world; to relinquish the omnipotent God of order and control (the God of the Institutionalised Church); to embrace truth as love and being as event; to move from universal claims to a hospitality of humble listening; and to rediscover the vulnerability of a belief in a relational God of care and compassion.

Further, "faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead." (James 2:17).
Dutney (1986, p. 19) noted that faithfulness to the gospel is both a faithfulness in and to the church and a faithfulness in and to the world at the same time.
(It is noteworthy and disappointing that although there is a stated commitment to being faithful to the gospel in and to the world, and that the Basis of Union is missional in outlook, there is scant consideration of the community services of the uniting churches in the Basis of Union.)

Faith needs a firm foundation and faith needs a mission (Matthew 7:24-27; Luke 6:48-49). The mission needs a message and the message needs to be supported by a structure that is congruent with both the mission and the message.

Foundational beliefs

For the Uniting Church in Australia the firm foundation is Jesus the Christ. Three core beliefs surround this foundation: incarnation, resurrection and trinity.

The core belief of the incarnation

Incarnation means to “enflesh” and refers to the belief that Jesus was God made human. The radical idea was that, rather than God being separated from creation, distant and aloof; God became present, became one of us, was born, lived and died as a human being (Hebblethwaite, 1983). Therefore, a focus for the church in the world is not separated, distant or aloof; rather it ought to be engaged in the real lives of people from birth till death.

The core belief of resurrection

Resurrection is the belief that three days after Jesus was crucified on a cross near Jerusalem, he was raised from death and became alive again (Evans, 1983). Whilst there is controversy around this belief (Spong, 2001; Funk, 1996), it has been a source of hope for believers over millennia in the face of oppression. In essence, resurrection declares that death is not the end; that love will prevail over death; that new life is possible starting today. We do not have to wait until we die to enjoy the divine presence, love, joy, peace, faith and hope.

The core belief of trinity

Trinity is the belief that God in God's totality is unknowable completely, but God has been revealed to humanity as three persons, as Father/Mother, as Son/Jesus the Christ, and as ever-present Spirit. Trinity declares that this God is relational, and these relationships are characterised by grace, relationships that invite participation (Mackey, 1983). "Grace" refers to a particular sort of love, a love that is a self-giving. Grace is a gift of God that involves forgiveness and a participation in divine life (Yarnold, 1983).

The concept of participation in divine life presupposes the belief that humans are created in the Image of God, which presupposes God as creator. A recurring question is, what does it mean to be made in the image of God? Throughout history Christian people have asked this question and in each age have usually come up with an answer that reflects the dominant themes of their time.

The image of God

From within a Greek culture, the early church expressed its answer in terms of its Hebrew heritage. An example of this can be found in the Gospel of John chapter 1, especially verse 14, "And the Word became flesh and lived among us". The image of God was enfleshed, embodied in Jesus. In an endeavour to understand how this could happen, the church developed a belief in the trinity. The result was the Nicene Creed which proclaimed how a living personal relational God could be both three and one.

Greek philosophical thought located the image of God in one's ability to reason (Cairns, 1953, pp. 58- 61). Whilst early Christian writings attempted to communicate Hebrew ideas into a Greek culture, Augustine attempted to interpret Biblical thought from a Greek perspective. Augustine demonstrated how reason and the trinity could be brought together. Unfortunately, embodied experience was not a part of Augustine's vision of the Trinitarian expression of the image of God. The Augustinian emphasis on the oneness of God, now

located the image of God as trinity inside an individual, which could be found in human rationality expressed through memory, understanding and love of God, in an individual (Cairns, 1953, p. 96).

The eastern orthodox churches have always retained the primary emphasis on the threeness of the living, personal, relational God, and declared that we all bear the imprint of God, manifested as a desire for humans to be in relationship with Absolute Love (Crawford and Kinnamon, 1983, p. 77). This emphasis on relationship suggests that the image of God may not be located entirely within an individual person. Even in the western church tradition, Karl Barth proposed that the image of God was most aptly expressed in marriage between a man and a woman (Cairns, 1953, p.168). I believe Barth was essentially correct by locating "image of God" in a mutual loving relationship, but was too restrictive in confining the concept to heterosexual marriage.

The image of God is personal and relational. The image of God is expressed in relationships that are mediated by grace, relationships that are based on unconditional love for the other, and not based on reason, race, class, gender, sexual orientation or ability (Harriman, 1996, p.32).

I work as a Chaplain with people with intellectual disability, some of whom carry physical disability as well. The key question I have asked myself is "How is the image of God present for someone who is unable to move, unable to speak and may be unable to respond to others?" A relationship based on grace does not require a response, because it is a love that gives without the necessity for a reward. Each Image-of-God relationship that I am a part of will be different. Even if I take all of these experiences and roll them into one, my knowledge of God will only be an approximation.

The image of God is not a personal possession. It becomes a reality in the shared space between persons. We have a desire to be loved: we can contribute to it, we may encounter God in and through the relationship, but we cannot possess it.

Therefore, some of the implications of this understanding of the Image of God are an acknowledgement that each person has dignity and is of value; that in the church we are impoverished if we fail to embrace people in image-of-God relationships; that when we respect differences, we acknowledge that God is not completely knowable, and that in each new image-of-God relationship we receive a fresh glimpse of God; and that Image-of-God relationships transcend and relativise race, class, gender, sexual orientation and ability. These relationships are expressed in many forms of intimacy, from assistance, to friendship, to sexual intimacy, and are gracious, right, just, reconciling and transforming.

In summary, the foundational beliefs upon which the Church discerns its mission, message and structure are the divine revelations of love; through incarnation as divine engagement; resurrection as enduring presence; and trinity as divine interdependent relationships of grace; all understood in the context of faith. These beliefs find embodied expression through Image-of-God relationships, which are gracious, right, just, reconciling and transforming.

What is the mission?

If the foundational beliefs of the Church are faith, hope and love, then what does the Uniting Church understand its mission to be?

According to the World Council of Churches (2006, IV, 11) “mission is integral to the life of the church” expressed in the proclamation of the Gospel and to offer Christ, and that the purpose of mission is to bring “about the good of all creatures and the well being of the earth.” Dutney (1986, p. 100) observed that there was a “call to mission in every paragraph” of the Basis of Union. I would like suggest that there are three broad themes that can be discerned from the Basis of Union, which help to discuss the mission of the Church: worship, witness and service; journey; and uniting.

The theme of worship, witness and service

The trilogy of worship, witness and service, and similar words occur in at least 12 out of the 18 paragraphs of the Basis of Union. In broad terms this is about beliefs, values and actions. The genesis of the interrelationship between worship, witness and service can be found in the story about Jesus being asked by a lawyer, which is the greatest commandment in the law (Matthew 22: 34- 40). The law here probably referred to the Torah, the first five books of the Hebrew scripture.

Jesus' answer, which came from the Torah itself, firstly, to love God with your whole being (Deuteronomy 6: 5), and secondly, love your neighbour as yourself (Leviticus 19: 18), probably came as no great surprise to his inquirer. However Jesus did say two surprising things. The first surprise was that Jesus said that the first command was like the second. One is a likeness of the other and vice versa. They belong together like two sides of a coin. Dawn (1995, p. 106) has called upon the Church to recover this unity of belief expressed in worship and action, both individually and corporately. The second surprise was the statement "that on these two commands hang all of the law and the prophets". Jesus' own summary of the Hebrew Scriptures was to connect love for God with love for others and self love.

In the Gospel of John 13: 34 Jesus goes one step further by declaring "I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another." In this command Jesus appears to exhort the disciples to not only hear the words of Torah, but also to follow his example of love. It is interesting to note the example of love that Jesus gives prior to this exhortation is to wash the feet of the disciples, including Judas (John 13: 4- 20). Barth, in Thiessen Nation (2004, p. 444), pointed out that the foot-washing in the Gospel of John replaced the last supper (Eucharist), compared to the other gospel narratives. The sacraments of Baptism and Eucharist provide the Church with a visible continuity to the actions of Jesus, which communicate the grace of God in the Church today, through worship.

Hauerwas and Wells (2004, p. 7) have argued that worship “is the most significant way in which Christianity takes flesh, evolving from a set of ideas and convictions to a set of practices and a way of life.” Hence Hauerwas and Wells (2004, p. 3) have shaped their book on Christian ethics “through the lens of Christian worship, most particularly the Eucharist.” Hauerwas and Wells’ approach concurs with Dawn that worship and ethics are inextricably linked. Thiessen Nation (2004, p. 444) has contended that foot-washing prepared people for the Eucharist, which prepared the Church for service. Cartwright (2004, p. 491) concluded that the Church’s witness was effective when the ethos of the faith community was consistent with its beliefs. Hence, worship is central, whilst witness and service are responses to meeting with God through water, Word, bread and wine.

In sum the theme of worship, witness and service speaks of an integration of belief and action, an integration of worship, witness and service; the ethical connection of head, heart and hand, both individually and collectively.

The theme of journey

The metaphor of journey is a recurring theme in the Basis of Union (1977).
It speaks of going forward together (para.1); of a “pilgrim people, always on the way” (para.3); declares the continuing presence of Christ with “people on their way” (para.8); a people on their “way to the promised end” (para.18). On this journey there is an invitation for all people to participate (para.7, 14).
This develops a picture of a people travelling together in relationship with each other into what may be changing and uncertain futures.
There are some significant journeys in the Hebrew and Christian scriptures.
I would like to briefly mention three, the journeys of Abram, Israel, and Jesus.

The journey of Abram

In Genesis 12ff we read the story of the journey of Abram from present day Iran to present day Palestine. This journey was a journey of faith into unknown lands and an unknown future. On this journey God made a promised

agreement, a covenant, with Abram and Sarai, to give them a family and land to possess. This created a tension between the priorities of people and possessions. This may be an enduring tension for people on the faith journey.

The journey of Israel

The journey of the people Israel was the exodus of the Hebrew people from Egypt into the desert, heading toward the land promised to Abram almost 700 years earlier. In the desert at the foot of a mountain God made a promised agreement, a covenant, with the people. This covenant, with the gift of the ten words, ten commandments, established a covenant community. God was to be the leader of the people. Moses was the prophet who spoke forth God's words to the people (Exodus 19, 20). God was revealed as living and personal and covenanting; the One who hears, speaks and acts.

Clements (1983, p. 127) observed that the Latin word for covenant was *Testamentum*. Hence the Hebrew Scriptures, sometimes called the Old Testament may be called the Old Covenant. Likewise the Christian writings may be called the New Covenant. Clements commented that covenantal language was prominent in the Hebrew history books from Joshua through to II Kings, which seems to indicate that covenant was a favoured term for the historians in the "late seventh and sixth centuries BC". Finkelstein and Silberman (2001) support this chronology, but suggest political as well as religious motives for the ancient historians. Clements (1983, p.128) has asserted that during the Reformation the biblical concept of covenant was developed by the reformers to establish mutual agreements amongst believers and that this may have led to the establishment of Federations in the New World, which "bound communities together through mutually accepted rights and obligations".

The journey of Jesus

The third journey is the journey of Jesus. Jesus was a man who maintained a covenantal relationship with God, even though it cost him his life. When asked, in Matthew's Gospel, which commandment was the greatest, Jesus responded by saying, the first is to love God with your whole being and a

second is like it, love your neighbour as yourself. On these two commands hang all the law and the prophets (Matthew 22:34-40). By saying this Jesus brings our personal, private, faith-life into the domain of our public behaviour. Public behaviour could be understood to impact on corporate behaviour as well. This is a call for consistency between what we believe and what we do. This is the task of an ethical life lived out in relationship with others.

The theme of uniting

Another theme from the Basis of Union is summed up in the word “uniting”.
After about 70 years of negotiation, the Congregational, Methodist and Presbyterian churches agreed to unite to establish the Uniting Church in Australia. That is uniting and not united, always in the present tense to denote ongoing activity. ”The name ‘uniting’ suggests a process” (Wood, 1986, p. 9).
The Basis of Union speaks of uniting, unity and diversity in various ways.
The word “uniting” appears in every paragraph as the specific name of the Uniting Church. Paragraph 1 declares that to be uniting is to be “open to constant reform”. Paragraphs 2 and 18 speak of a desire to seek union with other churches. There is also an expression of unity in Christ (para.3), and an historical unity with other denominations through the Apostles’ Creed and the Nicene Creed (para.9). Within this unity there is great diversity, “a diversity of gifts” where “all have a part” (para.13) and the recognition of a need for diversity (para.15). An indication of this unity and diversity can be found in the fact that the Basis of Union is published in Fijian, Indonesian, Korean, Samoan, and Tongan languages. Hence the Uniting Church in Australia is ecumenical in outlook without losing its identity. It embraces diversity, and whilst engaging with others, remains open to reform.

Another implication of the term “uniting” is the invitation to reconciliation and healing; the recovery of alienated relationships, the desire for healing and restoration. Uniting has within it a movement from being to becoming, from the actual towards the ideal, and in an ethical sense, uniting is a “means” that moves a diverse people towards the “end“ of unity.

In summary, the mission of the church, as a community of faith, hope and love, is to participate in God's mission in the world; expressed in the proclamation of the gospel and "pointing" to Jesus the Christ, through reconciliation and justice, peace-making and transformation. The mission of the Uniting Church was expressed in every paragraph of the Basis of Union and could be summarised through the themes of worship, witness and service as love in action; a spiritual, ethical journey of faith and covenant; and uniting as a process of being and becoming. The last paragraph of the Basis of Union (1977, para. 18) has drawn these themes together:

> The Uniting Church affirms that it belongs to the people of God on the way to the promised end. The Uniting Church prays that, through the gift of the Spirit, God will constantly correct that which is erroneous in its life, will bring it into deeper unity with other Churches, and will use its worship witness and service to God's eternal glory through Jesus Christ the Lord. Amen.

What is the message?

Within a broad understanding of the foundational beliefs of the Church as a community of faith, hope and love revealed in Jesus the Christ; and the missional approach of the Uniting Church summed up as being the diverse people of God on a journey of worship, witness and service toward unity; what is the message that can be shared with others? Evangelism is the term that describes how the message might be proclaimed and shared in the process of "making new Christians" (Abraham, 1994, p. 37). This essay will not be focussing on the techniques of being a messenger; rather it will focus on the some of the key Christian messages.

When Jesus was asked about what was the most important message that God would want to give to people, his response was (Matthew 22: 36-40) firstly to love God with your whole being (Deuteronomy 6:5) and the second thing was in the likeness of the first, to love your neighbour as yourself (Leviticus 19:18). These two commands, which Jesus linked were not new ideas from Jesus, rather they were Jesus' summary of the Hebrew scripture.

The command to love one another seems to be one of the core beliefs and expected behaviours of the early church, (Romans 13:9-10; James 2:8; Galatians 5:14; Ephesians 5:2; 1 Thessalonians 4:9; Hebrews 13:1; 1 Peter 1:22; 1 John 3:11, 4:7-12, 21; 2 John 5).

The message of love

In the Greek of Jesus' day there were several words used for the English word "love". According to Cranfield (1972, pp. 133-134) they were *eros* (sexualised love, the desire to possess and enjoy); *philia* (friendship); *storge* (family affection); *philadelphia* (brotherly and sisterly love); *philanthropia* (human kindness); and a rarely used form *agapao* (showing love by action). However, the Apostle Paul infused new meaning into *agapao* as the spontaneous, unconditional, self giving love of God in Christ.
The Christian belief system took this idea of self-giving love, of *agapao* love and understood Jesus as the embodiment of divine self-giving. This belief is implicit to the incarnation, where the essence of God became embodied in a person whose identification with humanity was complete and declared that God is present with people. Divine love given freely and unconditionally is referred to as grace. In the reformed tradition a distinction is made between a natural theology of cause and effect, (where evil is punished and goodness is rewarded) and a theology of grace, where there is nothing good enough or nothing bad enough that humans can do to attract God's attention, because we already have God's attention. There are no preconditions to receiving grace; all that is required is to respond to grace (Basis of Union, 1977, para. 3).

The message of free choice

The concept of free choice is embedded in the belief in God as creator.
Genesis 1 is a theological declaration that God has chosen to be creative as an act of free choice, not as a duty or an obligation. This is an important distinction to make. If God was active and present in the world because of a duty to do so, then God as creator would be obliged to act whenever people

called upon God to do so. There would be a necessary and duty bound relationship between creator and creature. Hence God's free choice in creating leaves people free to choose God or not. This is God's grace in action, in that God loved us before we love God. Grace is love given without expecting a response. Grace is love given hopeful of a response that is freely given in return. Grace is wild and free and does not conform to human rules of cause and effect, blessing and curse.

The message of reconciliation and justice

The World Council of Churches (2006, IV, 10) identified two basic messages that flow from the Grace of God: reconciliation and justice in the church and in the world. Yoder (1987) embeds reconciliation and justice in peacemaking. As mentioned above the attitude of uniting is bound up with reconciliation and justice. This message calls upon the messenger to be a peacemaker.

Therefore, in sum, the message that Uniting Church members are called to proclaim is that in Christ we love others as a self giving, we respond with love by free choice to the love we have experienced; and if love is the divine medium of human engagement, then reconciliation and justice are the purpose of being called to be peacemakers. This message is embedded in Biblical narrative and personal experience, as Logan (1994, p. 20) has recalled, "God has entrusted to us a story to be told and lived".

What is the structure?

What then is the structure that the Uniting Church has adopted to facilitate the journey of peacemaking through worship, witness and service, which has been founded on the divine gifts of faith, hope and love in Christ?

Dutney (1986, 89ff) observed that "The structure of the church then tends to be derived and controlled by these general (confessional and theological)

statements", which ultimately are derivative of a time, place, a theology and subsequent control of a people, rather than the collective imagination. The Basis of Union sought to use imaginative language that did not provide definitions, proscriptions and doctrines, but articulated affirmations that point to Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. Rather than developing a basis and structure of control over people, the authors of the Basis of Union sought to excite the imagination of members and to encourage mutual responsibility and collective action.

The Basis of Union (1977, para. 15) presented the governance and structure of the UCA. The key features are that the responsibility for governance in the UCA belongs to the people; comprised of representatives in a system of interrelated councils, which are organised locally regionally and nationally. Councils have limitations on their authority and are required to "give heed" to each other in "mutual submission" to each other "in the service of the Gospel."

Interrelated councils

There are five councils presented in the Basis of Union, the congregation, the elders' or leaders' meeting, the presbytery, the synod and the assembly. The congregation is the worshipping community of faith who gather for worship, witness and service. The elders' or leaders' meeting (now called the Church Council) comprised of the Minister and elected representatives, is focused on leadership within the local faith community and its engagement in the world. (The congregation and the church council can be considered together, in a similar way to the synod and the council of synod.) The presbytery is comprised of Ministers and a majority of elected representatives who provide oversight of district congregations. This is a form of group episcopacy, the group as bishop. The synod is comprised of Ministers and a majority of elected representatives who provide general oversight of worship, witness and service in regional congregations (usually across a State). The assembly is a national council comprised of Ministers and a majority of elected representatives who have a responsibility for faith and order in the Church. Ministers with a capital "M" denotes people in specified ministries, as set apart

from members of the Church who, as followers of Jesus, can be considered ministers as well. Agencies of the Church are responsible to either a synod or to assembly and are called upon to consider their congruity with the mission of the Church.

Consensus decision-making

The Basis of Union seems to present a non-hierarchical, non-clergy dominated system of interrelated councils who make recommendations to each other. This system was further strengthened by the introduction of a consensus decision-making process in 1997. An important feature of the consensus decision-making model is the capacity to listen to the dissenting minority, small group process and a limited role for a Westminster style of decision-making by formal majority (Manual for meetings, 2004).

In summary, the UCA is a “volunteer” organisation of interrelated councils where there is “no hierarchy or an ascending rank of order or power” (Dutney, 1986, p. 122), and where there are interrelated ministries because “all members are ministers and ministers are members” (Dutney, 1986, p. 117). A people journeying together, as followers of Jesus the Christ in worship, witness and service, as peacemakers who work toward transformation in people’s lives, in response to grace.

An exploration of structure

Embedded in the Basis of Union (1977, para. 10- 11), there is an understanding that the Uniting Church will continue to learn through the interplay of personal faith, Holy Scripture, tradition and modern scholarship.

In an endeavour to gain a broader deeper and richer understanding of the structure and governance of the UCA, this research will draw upon the witness of Hebrew Scriptures, Christian writings and the reformed tradition.

This will be followed by an assessment of the structure as it relates to the mission and message of the Church.

The witness of the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament) with respect to Structure and Governance

Because the UCA is embedded in the Christian Church, which emerged from the Jewish faith, the Hebrew Scriptures may have some indications regarding the structure of early religious communities.

There is much conjecture today about the historical veracity of the Hebrew Scriptures due to the limited and contestable nature of archaeological evidence. The old practice of a pick in one hand and a bible in the other meant that often the physical evidence was forced into a textual mould. It would seem prudent to approach the Hebrew scripture as a theological record of an ancient people's relationship with the divine over an extended period of time (Finkelstein and Silberman, 2001). Whilst it is accurate to say that people of today are different to the people of yesterday, maybe there are elements of the human condition that remain, such as love and hate, fear and awe, joy and pain. Hence I am of the view that the essence of stories and the themes that emerge are where the enduring message lies, rather than in the particularity of events.

Walter Brueggemann (1978) identified two socio-political trajectories for the Hebrew people. The first trajectory was that of a covenant made by God with Moses and the Hebrew people (Exodus 19), which established a covenantal community of twelve tribes with God as their leader. Brueggemann (1978: 16) observed that Moses and the Hebrew people had broken free of the Egyptian religion of "state triumphalism and the politics of oppression and exploitation" and had become part of an alternative community based on the "freedom of God and the politics of justice and compassion". This form of governance was pushed aside, about 250 years later, by the Hebrew people demanding a king

(1 Samuel 8). Brueggemann (1978: 28) regarded this dominant second trajectory as the adoption of a “royal consciousness” and hence a “royal numbness” to the pain and suffering of others, and an inability to care. What Brueggemann seems to have identified is an enduring tension between a familial and tribal view of a covenantal relationship to and with the divine, and a monarchical view of the relationship to and with the divine. Maybe there has been an enduring tension between covenantal and monarchical approaches, in the Judeo-Christian traditions, ever since.

McBride (2005, pp. 17-33) in an exploration of the book of Deuteronomy, gave an account of the people of Israel covenanting with God (the divine YHWH) through Moses. The sign and seal of the covenant was the Ten Commandments, and the subsequent Torah. The covenant constituted the federation of twelve tribes as the people of YHWH. The Torah was egalitarian in that it addressed all Israel. All Israelites were called upon to observe diligently the normative prescriptions of the Torah, and to be accountable to YHWH for maintaining justice in their common life.

Kings, priests and prophets were all subject to the Torah and its limitations on their office. The covenant established a theocratic community. Kings were chosen by YHWH and charged with the responsibility to study Torah and to sit on a juridical council. Kings could not acquire horses, could not make foreign alliances through marriage and could not accumulate wealth (Wilson, 2005, p. 120). The tribe of Levi was chosen by YHWH to be a tribe of priests who had a judicial and a cultic role. Levitical priests were not permitted to own land and were supported through taxes on those who did own land. Prophets were acknowledged to be people who spoke the words of YHWH, but their words were assessed by theological and practical criteria. The influence of each group of official voices was constituted and moderated by the Torah. The overall force of the Torah was to provide social policies that upheld the sanctity of life, the value of each person and shared prosperity.

Although the Torah constituted a theocratic community, McBride considered it to be an archetype for modern western constitutionalism. “For Jews and

Christians committed to the continuing struggle for social justice and human rights, the Deuteronomic model of theocratic humanism remains an eminently practicable legacy" (McBride, 2005, p.33). What McBride seems to have uncovered in the Torah is a prototype of the separation of powers, divine power (prophet) is separated from monarchical power (king), from religious power (priest), along with limitations to the extent of those powers.

Machinist (2005, p. 181) noted the tension between the role of kings and of prophets. The prophets persistently called the kings to account for their abuse of power in contravention of the Torah. Prophets longed for the day when kings would return to YHWH and restore the structure of a good society in accordance with the Torah. It would appear that there is no persistent polemic against the role of a king, as long as the king did not usurp the sovereignty of God. The implication here is that kings are one of the people who lead by example in their study of the Torah, who lead from amongst the people rather than use power over or power against the people.

However, Finkelstein and Silberman (2001, p. 318) as a result of modern archaeology, have concluded that, the Hebrew scriptures were written in "response to the pressure, difficulties, challenges, and hopes faced by the people of the tiny kingdom of Judah in the decades before its destruction and by the even tinier Temple community in Jerusalem in the post exilic period." Finkelstein and Silberman (2001, pp. 272- 281) gave Josiah, the king of Judah (639-609 BCE), the credit for beginning the task of crafting the Hebrew legends, stories and myths into a coherent whole. In spite of this work by Josiah to establish a monotheistic religion centralised in Jerusalem, the kingdom of Judah was destroyed in 586 BCE, just as the kingdom of Israel was in 724BCE.

Prior to the formation of the people of Israel, Petersen (2005, pp.75-88) concludes that the religious polity of Yahwistic faith was familial and patriarchal. Even though Israel adopted monarchy for several hundred years during their history, after the second exile in the sixth and fifth centuries BCE

they never returned to a monarchical polity (Finkelstein and Silberman, 2001, p. 316).

In essence, “the power of the biblical saga stems from its being a compelling and coherent narrative expression of the timeless themes of a people’s liberation, continuing resistance to oppression, and quest for social equality.” (Finkelstein and Silberman, 2001, p. 318).

During the reign of the kings of Israel and Judah, the prophets of YHWH called the kings and the people to remember the Davidic, Mosaic and/or Abrahamic covenants. The prophets’ message was hope, justice and shalom. Yoder (1987) has suggested that shalom was central. Whilst shalom is usually translated as peace meaning an absence of war, Yoder (1987, pp. 10-23) has shown that shalom has physical, relational and moral dimensions which called for well being, reconciliation and transformation of structures and people.

Theologically YHWH was a righteous God whose words were both judgment and salvation, who, because of divine faithfulness and loving kindness toward creation, desired to be reconciled to people, for people to be reconciled to the other (including all creation), and for a person to be reconciled to themselves, thereby establishing shalom within which justice, hope and love can be found. Therefore shalom becomes the eschatological vision and peace making becomes the mission of the people of God. Structures need to be those that liberate and transform. As Yoder (1987, p.38) declared “peacemakers must struggle against oppressors and oppressive structures, since until their power is broken, the needy and oppressed cannot go free and there can be no shalom”. Yoder seems to be convinced that shalom is not something that people have to wait for, a future hope. Rather shalom is possible here and now. Indeed Yoder seems to suggest that the divine ground of our being is shalom and that shalom is the human end. Shalom is both ontology and telos.

Wink (1992) summarised the creation stories of the Hebrew Scriptures in a three part movement: humanity was created “good” (see Genesis 1), has fallen (chosen to do evil), but can be redeemed (that is to be made good

again). Wink sees goodness as being the beginning and end of humanity mediated through redeeming grace in Christ. Wink then compares this mythic Judeo-Christian schema of redemption to the ancient Mesopotamian myth of Marduk and the schema of redemptive violence, where humanity is created in an act of violence, peace is achieved for a time, through the unilateral action of a hero (Marduk). However, violence will return and another hero will be needed. Wink argues that the dominant myth of modern story telling in movies, comics and books is the myth of redemptive violence. Violence is both the ontology and telos of redemptive violence.

Summary

Brueggemann identified the ancient and enduring tension between the shared power of covenantal communities and the dominating power of monarchy. McBride's analysis of Hebrew monarchy indicated a theocracy where there was a separation of powers between prophets, priests and king, where all were accountable to God. However, in the history of the Hebrew people the polity of monarchy was extant for about 500 years, but the vision of shalom developed as an enduring legacy of the divine relationship of God with Israel. The radical vision of shalom seems to be supported by the central myth of God as the creator of a good earth and good people, a people who corrupted their goodness by broken relationship with God and with each other, but goodness could be restored through repentance and forgiveness. God's people have a role as peacemakers, who as co-workers with God, can act for reconciliation and justice, and the restoration of goodness. This vision is a repudiation of violent means; a repudiation of the use of power over or against others to achieve a temporary peace or a temporary good.

The structure of the Uniting Church is more covenantal than monarchical, where there is a collective responsibility for decision-making and a separation of powers through the interrelated councils, but all are accountable to God and each other. The vision for mission in the Basis of Union through uniting, journey and worship, witness and service is consistent with the vision of shalom.

The witness of Christian writings (New Testament) with respect to structure and governance

Whilst there was a long history of covenanting in the Hebrew Scripture, how did the early Christian community understand the new covenant in Christ as it related to the structure and governance of the early Church?

The shape of the faith community who travelled with Jesus can be gleaned from the gospels. For three years Jesus was an itinerant preacher, teacher and healer who called twelve men to travel with him. However, there were women who followed Jesus too, and according to one story, seventy others were sent out to prepare the way for Jesus (Luke 10: 1-20). Jesus worshipped in the synagogue, taught in the outdoors, and was followed by a loose collection of people. Kung (1995, p. 67) has suggested that the idealised community of Luke in Acts 4: 32, where "they had everything in common", was more likely to have been a faith community who met in each other's homes, who preached the message of Jesus and disregarded possessions.

The earliest writings about the structure of the Church come from the Apostle Paul, whose writings predate the synoptic gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke. Longenecker (2002, pp.75- 80), notes that there are six major images that the apostle Paul uses to describe the early church: the people of God, the body of Christ, the household of faith/ God, the temple of God, the community of the Spirit, and God's eschatological community. Paul seems to use earthy and domestic terms such as "body" and "household" to describe the Theocratic, Christocratic, Pneumatocratic community of believers. Paul (1 Corinthians 12: 4- 31) suggested that there was a range of gifts, such as wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing, miracles, prophecy, tongues and interpretation given to the Church through people, who are given, "a manifestation of the Spirit for the common good." Paul located this collective of gifts within the metaphor of the church as a body. Paul then declared

different roles for people within the body; “first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then workers of miracles, then healers, helpers, administrators and speakers in various kinds of tongues”. Rather than regarding these lists of gifts and roles as something to aspire to, Paul (1 Corinthians 13) counted them as nothing, without love being the motive for action. Even faith and hope are subordinated to love. Volf (1992) has argued that if gifts of the Spirit are communal, then church structures ought to be “democratic”. Initially the organisation of these gifted people was administered by the Apostles, but as the company of early Christians grew the people were asked by the Apostles “to pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may appoint” to the duty of service (Acts of the Apostles 6). Seven deacons served the community so the apostles could focus on prayer and preaching.

The structures of the Uniting Church are consistent with the vision of the early Christian writings, where there is an acknowledgement that there is a diversity of gits and a diversity of people, and that it is the Spirit who calls people to the exercise of those gifts for the good of all. The Uniting Church echoes this approach by declaring that all members are ministers and all Ministers are members.

The witness of the reformed tradition with respect to structure and governance

Despite the early interdependent relational approach of the early Church the lure of political power and monarchy emerged as the Church grew in size and influence. The result was “the replacement of the norms of Christ and the early church by the norms of the imperial ideology” by the Roman Emperor Constantine in the fourth century CE (Kee, 1982, p. 4). The corruption of the new covenant in Christ with an imperial ideology began to be challenged in the middle ages, and culminated in the Reformation. According to de Senarclens (1963, p.109) the “Reformation is deeply rooted in the most primitive Christian tradition” with a return to Christ as the Head of the Church, based on the authority of Scripture alone, comprehended by faith alone (Calvin, 1961, p. 1053).

The Reformation challenged the monarchical model of church governance where the bishops of the church acted as mediators of Christ, and put the alternative view that no one person could mediate (Volf, 1992, p. 115). Hence, only the whole local church could discern the will of God for the people of God gathered in a particular place. God could communicate with particular congregations wherever and whenever they were, for example, John Wesley preaching in the outdoors. There is a vertical dimension and a horizontal dimension to this debate. The bishop sat in a vertical relationship (transcendent) to the Divine on behalf of the people, whilst the congregation sat in a horizontal relationship (immanent) with each other, who were collectively in relationship with the divine. The tension between governance by divine monarchy, and governance by relational covenant with the Divine, remain. However the Reformers believed that a Covenantal approach was in accordance with biblical warrant.

Calvin drew upon the words of the Apostle Paul who described the church as the body of Christ. However, Calvin (1961, p.1057- 1058) interpreted the roles of apostles and prophets to be temporary, only extant for the establishment of the church. The roles of teacher and pastor he regarded as permanent, but teachers could be prophetic and pastors could be apostolic. Calvin (1961, pp. 1060- 1067) recognised the roles of ministers of the Word, elders, deacons and pastors. Elders were to be governors of the church, and deacons were to focus on the care of the poor. The “external” call of pastors and ministers of the Word was recognised “by the consent and approval of the people” through elections presided over by pastors, confirmed by the laying on of hands. The placement of pastors and ministers of the Word was made and changed by public authority.

Calvin (1961, p. 1166- 1210) in an extended polemic, strongly questioned Papal authority, the legitimacy of councils, laws and traditions of the Roman Church. Consequently, in the structure of the reformed Church, Calvin (1961, p. 1493) preferred shared governance rather than aristocracy because “it is very rare for kings to control themselves”. “Therefore, men’s fault or failings

cause it to be safer and more bearable for a number to exercise government, so that they may help one another, teach and admonish one another; and, if one asserts himself unfairly, there may be a number of censors and masters to restrain his wilfulness (sic)". Calvin (1961, p. 1520) encouraged Christians to honour magistrates and rulers, but do not disobey God.

The structure of the UCA is strongly informed by the Reformation with its focus on shared decision-making and leadership, and the roles of minister of the Word, deacons, elders and pastors.

In summary, it would appear that the structure and governance of the Uniting Church in Australia have resonances with the Hebrew Scriptures and the early Christian writings; and has a consistency with the challenges of the Reformation to an imperial ideology that had infected the European Church. The Uniting Church in Australia has been established as a theocratic faith community with shared leadership and shared decision-making for the good of all. The Uniting Church provides a structure that facilitates peacemaking through worship witness and service, founded on the divine gifts of faith hope and love, and mediated through human faith, hope and love with and for others, in response to grace.

Comments on the UCA structure

Collective responsibility for decision-making seems to have worked fairly successfully since 1977. It has enabled the Church to wrestle with difficult issues such as sexuality and leadership.

My observation is that although group decision-making can work, the difficulty is that once the decision has been made, an informal reviewing of implementation remains. Hence the leadership who have been charged with

the task of implementing decisions do not appear to be trusted to do their job effectively, and nor can they, due the continual interference of “voices” from the sideline. The other response to some decisions seems to be a lack of clarity about who is actually responsible for the implementation of a decision, hence nobody does, whilst expecting that someone else will do it. These issues may be effectively addressed by an assertive leadership who insists that names are placed beside tasks, that achievable timelines are expected, that reasonable review dates are scheduled, and that people who are not directly involved, focus on their own work and leave others to do theirs.

I am also concerned about the insertion of a Synod Leadership Team (SLT) and a Mission Advisory Forum (MAF) into the Queensland Synod structure, because it may appear to be a step toward leadership by a ruling elite, which would be contrary to UCA polity. However, this concern would be allayed by a regular clear expression of the accountability of the SLT and the MAF to the Council of Synod and hence to the Synod in Session, as outlined in the Queensland Synod By Laws (2003, Q1.3.3 (a) to (m)).

I have a concern about the General Secretary of the Synod being referred to as the Chief Executive Officer (Synod report 1983). To imbibe the terminology of modern management, without consideration of the implications of introducing words that give assent to hierarchy, creates a precedent that might be hard to retract. However this sort of stratified language may seem familiar to those who were nurtured in the Methodist tradition, where superintendent ministers and senior ministers could be found.

The success of consensus decision-making process is dependent upon the full participation of all those involved, to do the pre-reading, and to prepare prayerfully.

Summary

The continued existence of the Uniting Church in Australia is not only evidence of the presence of the Spirit, and of the commitment and faithfulness of the people of the Church, but also due to the success of the structures to facilitate the message and mission of the Church. Shared leadership and shared decision-making have enabled the Uniting Church to engage in some very difficult issues. There has been pain and sorrow, and yet there is forgiveness and reconciliation, as people seek to be peacemakers in the name of Christ.

The Uniting Church in Australia is a theocratic faith community, which may be described as a type of democracy “anchored” in Christ, in whom people are called to faith, hope and love. Rather than governing by simple majority, following the whim of lobby groups or charismatic entrepreneurs, this anchored democracy focuses on the gospel, to discern the way forward in worship witness and service, together. This anchored democracy provides a structure where diversity is honoured and the dissenting minority is heard; where co-travellers remain open to reform as they seek the unity of peacemakers.

Chapter 3: The identity of Uniting*Care* Queensland (UCQ)

In the previous chapter the identity of the UCA was explored, with a particular emphasis on the structure and governance of the Church. The UCA was found to have a structure that was consistent with Scripture and the tradition, a structure which authentically facilitated the message and mission of the church. In this chapter I will explore the identity of UCQ by referring to its own documents and the documents of the UCA. I will also explore the claims made on UCQ from Governments, the professions, business and the community. This exploration is important to establish the authenticity of UCQ.

UCQ is embedded in the UCA

Missional activities of the antecedent churches to the UCA were the genesis of UCQ today. Although UCQ is embedded in the UCA, the Basis of Union only mentions "agencies" in paragraph 15 in the context of agencies being directly responsible to Synods or Assembly, and that agencies are called upon to "consider afresh" their commitment to the Church's mission and unity. It is hard to understand whether the Basis of Union considered that there was a qualitative difference between the "service" of the recurring theme of worship, witness and service, and the service carried out by the agencies; or whether the question of how the agencies were embedded within the UCA and hence needed to be accommodated in the planning for the UCA was simply overlooked; or whether the two forms of service were considered to be the same in spirit and as such the agencies did not need to be considered separately assuming that they shared the same mission and unity.

Prior to union in 1977

In Queensland, prior to union in 1977, the Methodist Conference of 1973 set up a working party to review the goals and structures of their social welfare work, which included the Blue Nursing Service, Lifeline, Child Welfare,

Special Caring, and hospitals (Methodist Conference minutes, 1974, p. 162). Recommendations from the 1974 Conference minutes included the recognition that staff were drawn from diverse spiritual backgrounds; that the Working Party extend its membership to Presbyterian and Congregational representation to plan for the advent of the Uniting Church; that all service positions be filled by qualified persons; that all programs be planned to allow for maximum accountability and participation in decision-making. Within the 1974 Working Party report was “A theological and ethical justification for the Church’s social welfare work”, written by G.R. Griffiths (1974, 169- 172).

An early theological understanding

This working paper asserted that the mission of the church was in fact the mission of God found “in Jesus the Christ, reconciling the world to Himself, and establishing peace.” The Church’s role was to “point to what it represents” and that the Church “must make real and present in its own being what it represents” (Griffiths, 1974, p. 170) The basis for social welfare work was Jesus’ own ministry, which was to serve; to be prophetic (advocates to and for all people); to be a pioneer of new social work; to relate to the world as it really is; and to critically evaluate its own welfare work. The Church’s pioneering work needed to address areas neglected by others; to be ambivalent about Government subsidy; to only establish pilot projects (rather than being bound to permanent services) in an endeavour to protect the Church from “sacrificing its freedom and being a conservative and anachronistic institution in a rapidly changing world” (Griffiths, 1974, p. 171). Critical evaluation of the Church’s social welfare work should be undertaken on the basis of effectiveness and validity; social welfare work ought to remain connected to the worship and witness of the Church (welfare ought not become an end in itself); and the quality of service ought to be evidenced by compassion, love, hope, humility, understanding and skill (Griffiths, 1974, p.172). Many of these issues remain. However most of the services have grown beyond being pilot projects and have become significant and respected parts of the communities in which they began. In 1976 two members of the Social Welfare Working Party joined the provisional Social Services

Commission, for the soon to be formed UCA (Methodist Conference, 1976, p. 189).

The first Queensland Synod

The first Queensland Synod in 1977 received reports from the Blue Nursing service (Minutes, 1977, pp. 138-139), Special Caring Services Division (Minutes, 1977,, pp. 126-131), Division of Child and Family Welfare (Minutes, 1977, pp.141-146), Life Line (Minutes, 1977, pp. 131-138), the Hospitals (Minutes, 1977, pp.146-151) and Crossroads (Minutes, 1977, p.114). The Department of Welfare Services gave oversight to these agencies. Their reports reflected the linkage between congregations and the welfare services of the Church. The majority of the reports acknowledged the financial support of the State and Commonwealth governments in the form of grants, subsidies and allowances (Minutes, 1977, pp. 129, 131, 138, 139, 144, 148). One report noted that “as of January 1978, no part of the Division Ministry will receive Church Budget Assistance.” (Minutes, 1977, p.131). It seems that almost from the beginning, the welfare work of the Uniting Church would become more dependent on fund-raising and government support than ever before.

In 1983 the Department of Welfare Services became known as the Department for Community Service. The internal structure of the department was the responsibility of the Director and the Commission for Community Service (Reports of the seventh Synod, 1983, p. 235). The Commission was accountable to the Council of Synod. As the result of a review of the Department for Community Service, which was presented at the 1995 Synod, the Commission became a Board with increased legal accountabilities, and the Board continued to report to the Council of Synod and the Synod in session. The Department for Community Service changed its name in the year 2000 to Uniting*Care* Queensland to align its “brand” with Uniting*Care* Australia.

Uniting*Care* Australia

Uniting*Care* Australia is accountable to the Assembly of the UCA. Uniting*Care* Australia was established to advocate for community service issues within the UCA, with Government and in the community. It has no legal jurisdiction over UCQ, but presents a collective vision for community service in the UCA (Uniting*Care* Australia Mandate, 2005). The collective vision is embedded in beliefs of the UCA (Uniting*Care* Australia, Faith foundations, n.d. pp. 3- 4), such as God's action in Christ for the "transformation of humanity, within a restored natural world"; the challenge "to be a fellowship of reconciliation"; "God's love is extended to all people"; to be a reforming pilgrim people; and an equality of opportunity for all people. The collective core values of justice, dignity and fairness for all people with a particular concern for the most disadvantaged and marginalised are affirmed. These core values are promoted by democracy, best practice, advocacy, broad partnerships, research and innovative practice (Uniting*Care* Australia, n.d. p. 5). These values are supported by twelve commitments, four foundational concerns, four defining characteristics, and four specific roles. The foundational concerns are the common good, a united Australia, a just society and one world. The defining characteristics are human rights, social well being and restoration of nature, pluralism, and reconciliation. The specific roles are advocacy, a prophetic voice, service to those in need, and shared responsibility (Uniting*Care* Australia, n.d. pp.6- 14).

Vision, mission and values of UCQ

UCQ's response to the faith foundations of Uniting*Care* Australia was to articulate a consistent vision. "Uniting*Care* Queensland will offer courageous leadership in human service, through a clear focus on quality, a voice for a fair and just society, and policies which are holistic, compassionate and creative" as a vision on behalf of all of its agencies (Uniting*Care* Queensland, 2004, p. 12). Their mission says, "Uniting*Care* Queensland expresses in its work the Church's call to participate in God's loving transformation of people and the

world through the care, compassion and commitment of its staff, the quality of its services to people and its advocacy for a fair and just society" (Uniting*Care* Queensland, 2004, p.12). The key values expressed by UCQ are caring, compassion, commitment, justice and service. There seems to be a significant match between the vision, mission and values of UCQ and Uniting*Care* Australia. What is the structure that supports the mission and service of UCQ?

The current situation

The Queensland Synod By Laws (2003) indicate that the UCA, through the Council of Synod, appoints the Director and the members of the UnitingCare Board. By Law Q 2.2.6 (a) says that the UnitingCare Queensland Board is accountable to the Council of Synod for stewardship and governance, and (b) "UnitingCare Queensland service groups must be constituted to allow for appropriate forms of stakeholder accountability, consultation, and support relationships", and makes provision for support and/or pastoral care relationships between UnitingCare service centres and programs, and Congregations, Presbyteries and Parish Missions to be established through a covenanting process.

Structurally UCQ has a Board and a Director, with chains of command, line management and delegated authorities. UCQ is hierarchical, where staff are employed at different levels in line with the expectations of unions and workers, which create career paths and capacity for promotion.

The UCA has been inclusive of UCQ in its Vision for Mission (2002, 4.1) when it specifically calls upon "all the service agencies and institutions associated with the work of Uniting*Care*," to "regularly and vigorously evaluate their work, their policies, their decisions and actions in the light of this Vision and the values that inform and guide it,". This call is the applied ethics challenge for UCQ, which this research may help to inform. This call also echoes the Basis of Union (1977, para. 15) where agencies are called upon to "consider afresh" their commitment to the Church's mission and unity.

The UCA at the 2005 Synod reaffirmed its Vision for Mission, which stated, “In our changing world, in response to the imperative of the gospel and our experience of God’s grace, we are called to share with God in transforming the world.” (p.C5-1). This notion of people responding to the love of God by being co-workers with God to bring about transformative change, hopefully for the better, can be expressed in many ways. The UCA understands that UCQ fulfils this vision by “continuing to develop and support initiatives in community service that pursue justice for, and enhance the quality of life of, the aged, the poor, the homeless, the refugee, those with a disability, and other disadvantaged people in our society” (p. C5-4). In brief the UCA wants UCQ to bring about transformative change in the world by pursuing justice and enhancing the quality of life for people.

UCQ is owned by the UCA. UCQ is legally embedded in the UCA as constituted by an Act of Parliament 1977. In 2005 UCQ employed about 14500 staff, and 6000 volunteers, with an annual expenditure of around $676 million and a vast array of services through the Wesley Missions, Uniting Health Care, Blue Care, Lifeline Community Care and Crossroads. UCQ describes itself as “the health and community service provider of the Uniting Church in Australia, Queensland Synod” (UCQ Annual Report, 2005, p. 15).

In 1996 the Council of Synod adopted this vision from UCQ (n.d. p. 1) “Uniting*Care* Queensland will offer courageous leadership in human service, through a clear focus on quality, a voice for a fair and just society, and policies which are holistic, compassionate and creative.” This vision is underpinned by the values of caring, justice and service.

In brief, UCQ seeks to be courageous about quality, advocacy and holistic, compassionate and creative policies, underpinned by caring, justice and a commitment to service. Whilst this vision has a future focus, it is timely to remember that the work of UCQ is part of a long history of Christian ministry that can be traced back too Jesus of Nazareth, and that the work is not just confined to the healing of individuals, but has always had wider ramifications that impact on staff and society as well

Government vision and mission in relation to UCQ

Since the 1970's funding models have changed. Grants and subsidies have given way to agencies submitting proposals in a tendering process that addresses specific outcomes, or individualised funding formulas with specific outcomes written into contracts (Kerr and Savelsberg 2001). These changes are good and bad. The exchange of money for community service work needs to be accounted for, but is the financial bond the only consideration when the value of the UCA's community service is assessed? What are the key expectations or the stated aims or the missions of these three groups who contract together to provide services in the community.

The Queensland Government's Disability Services (2004) state, "Our vision is for a society that values people with a disability, upholds their rights and supports their equitable participation in everyday life." And "Our mission is to lead and foster innovation to enhance the quality of life of people with a disability".

Queensland Health (n.d.) states their vision as "Leaders in health- partners for life" and their mission as "Promoting a healthier Queensland", through four core values of "professionalism, teamwork, performance accountability, quality and recognition". In brief, the Government claims to be a leader in quality and innovative services, which values people, rights, equity, and accountability.

There seems to be significant agreement between the UCA, UCQ and Government regarding vision and mission particularly in the areas of quality, justice and creativity. Is this really the situation? Just because the same words are used, do they have the same meaning? I suspect that people in leadership positions throughout UCQ would have some doubts. In my role as a Chaplain in human services I have made the following observations.

Beneath the superficial veneer of words there are other, more powerful, issues that shape the relationship. UCQ seems to be stuck in the middle, between the expectations of the owner, the UCA, and the expectations of its funding bodies, the Government for disability, families and some aged care work, and the medical insurance funds and Medicare for hospitals. UCQ is in a state of identity-tension, between living up to its stated vision and mission to care, as the name Uniting*Care* suggests, and the pragmatic concerns of balancing the budget and the expectations to perform and conform for Government.

At the last Synod, recommendation 04.38 (g) was noted in the UCQ report "that a contribution from Uniting*Care* Queensland be determined on a fair and equitable basis …", with six qualifications, to the Mission and Service fund of the Queensland Synod (25th Synod Reports, 2005, p. C17-6). Recommendations like this further cloud the identity of UCQ. Is UCQ an expression of the mission of the church, or is it a business of the church, or is it a quasi government organisation that the UCA has its logo attached to?

Regardless of the expectation of a contribution to the Mission and Service fund the specific call of the UCA (2002, 4.1) to "all the service agencies and institutions associated with the work of Uniting*Care*," to "regularly and vigorously evaluate their work, their policies, their decisions and actions in the light of this Vision and the values that inform and guide it," still stands.

It is not just the UCA that wants UCQ to evaluate its work. The funding bodies expect accountability as well. Therefore any discussion about the relationship between the UCA and UCQ must include the role of government funds and expectations. In addition there are expectations from the professions and their practices; and the expectations of business and their models of governance, management and leadership. The type of accountability varies with the nature of the relationship. The accountability for the UCQ-government relationship is primarily financial. The accountability of the UCQ-professions relationship is practical. The accountability of the UCQ-UCA relationship is ethical and theological. When there are multiple accountabilities it seems to me that a

strong sense of attachment and identity are important ingredients of authenticity.

The dimension of authenticity refers to issues such as, being honest and being consistent between what we say we believe and what we do. To put it in the Australian vernacular, it is about being “fair dinkum”. The identity of an organisation precedes considerations of authenticity. Abbey (2000, p. 88) makes the observation that “identity orients us in moral space.” Therefore, before there can be meaningful discussion about ethics and morality, the question of identity for the UCA and UCQ needs to be addressed.

Authenticity

The nexus between identity and ethical engagement has been explored by the Canadian philosopher Charles Taylor. Taylor’s (Abbey, 2000, pp. 58- 67) starting point is an ontology of human identity. For Taylor, ontologically, human beings are self-interpreting creatures. As self interpreting creatures, humans generate knowledge, which is initially the outcome of having an embodied existence and experience. The communication of experience and bodily reality occurs through language, which is created in dialogue with others. This ontology has historicist dimensions as well.

The historicist dimensions of selfhood can be found in the following distinctive aspects of the modern self (Abbey, 2000, pp. 72- 99). Humans are embedded in time and place; embrace freedom as radical disengagement; explore their inner depths; seek to be authentic; affirm an ordinary life with practical acts of benevolence; and acknowledge the plurality of the self in the context of history and interrelatedness. This ontology with its historicist dimensions indicates the depth and complexity of concerns that a group of people engaging in ethical dialogue might face, as they seek to be authentic together. Mulhall (2004, p. 117) observed that authenticity, being true to one’s self, ”is an essentially dialogical matter”.

For Taylor (Smith, 2002, p. 217), dialogue regarding ethical goods draws on the creative imagination as well as rational designations, to discover the sources of life goods to make them more tangible. This process is called articulation. Smith (2002, p. 115) has summarised three primary sources of authentic identity formation, which can be drawn upon when "interpreting the features of goods that make them good". The sources are "God, nature, and human freedom". Moral sources are functioning when they "empower the realization of the good in us" (Smith, 2002, p. 114). Different people will draw upon different sources depending on their belief system and the way they view their engagement in the world of nature, or they may confine their ethical engagement to human interactions.

Whilst Taylor's work focuses on the individual moral self in relation to, and in dialogue with others; I want to extrapolate the articulation of authentic identity to organisations, which are collections of individuals. Therefore an ethics of engagement is not about what I decide to be right or wrong, but it is about what we decide to be right or wrong in terms of authenticity, embodiment and embeddedness in time and place. UCQ is embedded in the UCA and they are both embedded in a society, which is governed by elected representatives. These organisations have history, sets of ideological propositions and contemporary pressures that need to be acknowledged in ethical deliberations. Taylor (Abbey, 2000. p. 161) referred to the zones of meaning created by language, culture and beliefs as moral horizons. Horizons are permeable to change. When moral horizons are challenged by encountering difference, they will change; they may be enriched without necessarily adopting the belief of the other. This encounter is referred to as a fusion of horizons (Abbey, 2000, p. 162).

At the beginning of this chapter the horizon of identity for UCQ was discussed; its history and development. A fusion of horizons of identity for UCQ was explored in its relationship with the UCA. This essay will now turn to the fusion of horizons of identity for UCQ in its relational congruity to and with other stakeholders.

The relationship of UCQ and client expectation

The ambivalence of identity that UCQ suffers in its relationship with the UCA is further clouded by authors who question the capacity of church based human services to deliver authentic services.

Stainton (1998) identified the limitations on community care practitioners to deliver on the rhetoric of community care policy with respect to choice, rights, and consumer power. Stainton (1998, p.136f) contended that the capacity for choice was derived from autonomy or self determination, which in turn could become a competitor with the assertion of human rights. Competing rights are usually resolved in favour of those with more financial, positional, and or cognitive power. Stainton (1998, p. 137) referred to this use of power as "structural paternalism". The remedy for this was for the state to give control of means and ends, to meet the needs of a person, to that person. People requiring support can negotiate with the state, through a third party advocate, for sufficient funds to buy services from a service provider as required (Stainton, 1998, p. 138). The problem with current funding practices is that service providers are accountable to the funder, rather than the person being served. Even though some people with disability receive individualised funding packages, the control of means and ends exists in the relationship between the funder and the case manager (Stainton, 1998, p. 140). Hence, the desire for a service provider to authentically deliver services consistent with a stated vision and mission is fundamentally compromised, because of the way the system is structured. For people to be genuine consumers implies that they should have control over their money and what they will spend it on. Currently, service providers are the consumers of funds, and people being supported are merely instrumental to organisational ends.

Kerr and Savelsberg (2001) concluded that the community service sector have become servants of the state, and as such will have little power to effect systemic change. Even though Governments provide the funding, the

responsibility for welfare outcomes has shifted from Governments to the community service sector.

Gregg (2000) observed that whilst Christian churches have been involved in community services for a very long time, the acceptance of Government funds, with explicit and implicit conditions attached, is a direct threat to the identity and credibility of the church. Gregg seems to imply that the Churches' desire to faithfully serve the community is being taken advantage of by Governments for their own purposes.

In the late 1980's and early 1990's there was some debate about whether community services of the church should remain under church control. Pollard (1991, p. 14) suggested that Christian agencies needed to define their Mission in terms of the mission of the church. Grierson (1991, p. 18) identified the church as a catalyst for community services, which once established were relinquished to the community. In so doing the church would not become encumbered by large community services. Unfortunately, by the early 1990's, the UCA's community service work in Queensland was already large and any relinquishment would have been very expensive, either as a cost to the departing agencies, or as a loss to the UCA. Regardless of the debate, which can still be heard in some councils of the Church, UCQ is still embedded in the UCA and an approach that can reconcile the tensions between church and state, and the tension between church and community service provision needs to be found.

The role of Governments

Bunting (2004) explains that the focus of government on accountability through reviews and accreditation is due to a preoccupation with audit and control. These measures are seen as necessary to prove that more can be done with less, because the electorate would not want to pay more taxes to deliver a better service. The micro management of services by Government departments is seen as necessary, because measurable outcomes are proof to a suspicious public, (who are given voice through a political opposition and

the media), that they can get what they want. Bunting (2004, p. 139) identifies the shift from citizen to consumer, through the erosion of deference paid to professionals, through better access to independent information, and through a sense of entitlement intrinsic to “consumer sovereignty”. Eddy (2006), Harris (2006) and Zipin (2006) use the term neo-liberalism to describe the above practices.

Harris (2006, p. 9) defines neo-liberalism as a political rationality based on the liberal ideal of autonomy, expressed in the three core elements of competition, individualisation and authoritarianism. Competition extends to the privatisation of government public service institutions. However, not all government institutions can be privatised, such as health and education; but the government demands certain outcomes by controlling the flow of funds. Individualisation (Harris, 2006, p. 10) transforms citizens into consumers, because collective concerns and public interests are reduced to the personal choices of autonomous individuals. The marketisation of public services removes the power of professionals to decide what is best for the client. On the other hand a client may not know what is best either. This suggests that the way forward is a collaborative approach between professionals and individual clients, without government interference. There is a sense in which the hegemony of powerful institutions needs to be broken. However, for the political pendulum to swing completely in favour of the individual, creates a new form of tyranny. The words of Jesus, exhorting people to love their neighbour as themselves, echo through the shift from welfarism to neo-liberalism. Hence, there needs to be a balance between the interests of the collective, and the interests of an individual.

The problem with neo-liberal individualisation is its “marriage” to competition and authoritarianism. According to Harris (2004, p. 11) “neo-liberal governments are disciplinarian in industrial and economic matters, where they enforce reforms aimed at producing entrepreneurial yet obedient behaviours”. This authoritarian approach is a direct attack on the liberal notion of human freedom. The micro-management techniques employed to create obedient

behaviours are based on a lack of trust that funders have for service providers.

Zipin (2006, p. 30) asserts that bullying "saturates the whole apparatus" of neo-liberal managerialism, which promotes "performative fabrications"(Zipin, 2006, p. 28) where "*images* of "achieved quality" gain precedence over substantive achievement; insists on "budget supremacy" (Zipin, 2006, p. 29) which normalises excessive workloads, reduces time for reflection and encourages expediency; and asserts "proceduralism" (Zipin, 2006, p. 29) which "reinforces vertical accountability of middle managers to senior management". The culture of bullying that Zipin describes constitutes a significant threat to UCQ and its call to be an authentic expression of the mission of the UCA, to both its staff and clients.

However, Bunting (2004, p. 133) discloses an alternative possibility to deliver better services based on competition between service providers, decentralised authority, financial transparency and systemic accountability. This resonates with the work of Russell Ackoff (1999), whose approach I will be discussing in full below.

The role of governments is problematic because, on one hand, the need for reasonable accountability is necessary and understandable; but on the other hand, the micro management of services without additional funding to meet the requirements is unsustainable. The Church ought to be able to say to Governments, we will deliver on these agreed outcomes, but we reserve the right to achieve those outcomes in a way that is consistent with our own beliefs, mission and values.

Wilma Gallet (2006) considers how church-sponsored community services ought to respond to the competitive tendering and market model of governments. The commercialisation of community services has introduced new concepts of "competition, compliance, corporatisation and commercialism" (Gallet, 2006, p. 1). Gallet's (2006, p. 1-2) response to these challenges is to establish new paradigms; to replace competition with

collaboration, through community based engagements; to replace compliance with capacity building, through the empowerment of others; to replace corporatisation with a community of faith, where there is a strong focus on people and their giftedness; and to replace unifocal commercialism with a multifocal commitment to being a values driven mission of the church. Gallet (2006, p. 3) contends that church-sponsored community services need to maintain a distinctive identity by attending to four "key elements". Firstly, to articulate clearly the mission and purpose of the work, and embed gospel values into every aspect of organisational documentation and organisational life. Secondly, to reframe religious language intentionally and to "weave" it into "internal and external conversations". Thirdly, to employ "professionally competent" people who "understand the mission of the church in transforming lives and transforming society". Fourthly, to link the provision of community services to "local congregations and church communities".

The role of the professions

The professions are an integral part of achieving community service outcomes. However, the training and practices of the professions can further cloud the relationship of UCQ in the community. McKnight (1995, p. x) declared that there are four "counterfeits" to community: "professionalism, medicine, human service systems, and the criminal justice system". Care cannot be created by a system. "Care cannot be produced, provided, managed, organized, administered or commodified", because "care is the consenting commitment of citizens to one another". McKnight (1995, p. xi) contended that professionals who work "seeking imperial prerogatives" deny citizens and communities opportunities to solve their own problems by asserting superior knowledge that citizens need to solve their problems. To accept professional help is to cut people off from their community. The human service industry in which professionals work has created a "client making culture, which replaces community with management, stories with curriculum, and care with commodities." The net result being a "serviced society is a careless place dominated by impotent institutions and burgeoning social

pathology” which is expressed in a growing criminal justice system (McKnight, 1995, p. xi).

McKnight (1995, p. 18ff) described professionals as “inefficient”, “arrogant” and “iatrogenic”. Even though professionals cost more to employ and do less, they are elitist, dominating and good at identifying deficiencies in others. The survival of human service systems depends on professionals who can generate service options to meet the growing needs, albeit created, in clients. Professionals disable people by translating needs into deficiencies, ignoring socio-political and socio-economic factors, and in the process create a new specialty with “advanced techniques” (McKnight, 1995, p. 43- 45). Ultimately service systems need deficient individuals as economic units for financial viability. Hence, clients and professionals are more important than ancillary staff in organisations run in this manner.

It is unlikely that this situation will change rapidly because of the contribution that the service industry makes to the economy. In March 2005, it was estimated that the not-for-profit sector in Australia employed more than 600,000 people, with gross annual revenue of $70 billion, which represented about 10% of the economy (Ferguson, 2005, p. 45).

Mc Knight (1995, p. 169) has identified three dominant visions of society. The first is a “therapeutic vision” of a growing service industry where the well being of people is facilitated by professionals who know what is right to do, where the “ultimate liberty” is seen as “the right to treatment”. The second dominant vision is an advocacy society where labelled people are protected and supported by advocates, who act as “a defensive wall of helpers to protect an individual against an alien community”. People who want to participate in the third vision of community “see a society where those who were once labeled, exiled, treated, counselled, advised, and protected are, instead, incorporated into community, where their contributions, capacities, gifts, and fallibilities will allow a network of relationships involving work, recreation, friendship, support, and the political power of being a citizen”. McKnight (1995, p. 176- 178) has challenged the Christian community to adopt the prophetic experience of

“getting it backwards”, where leadership is exercised as a servant, where “the poor …will inherit the Kingdom”, where weeping will become laughter. However there are good servants and bad servants. Good servants cannot “use the Christian imperatives of mission and service to dominate and control” other people, whereas bad servants do.

Whilst this may be challenge enough, McKnight goes one step further recalling the words of Jesus, from John 15: 15, with what may be seen as a revolutionary idea for contemporary human services, that when we love as Christ loved, we are no longer servants, but friends. “Friends are people who *know*, care, respect, struggle, love justice and have a commitment to each other through time” McKnight, 1995, p. 178). Peace makers engage in friendship relationships. Peace makers make friends, they move from *agape* to *philia*: peace makers move from the dispassionate, unconditional, positive regard for the other, to the partiality of friendship.

The impact of human service practices

Clapton (1999, p. 382) saw friendship as the ethical relationship that could rupture the orthodox and patriarchal practices of church-sponsored human services for people with intellectual disability. Clapton (1999, p. 195) has discussed, critiqued and summarised four practices that are extant in society: practices of penalty, pathos, pathology and philosophies. The elements of practices that are relevant to this discussion, which Clapton highlighted, are the biblical motifs, the underpinning ethical principles, and the interpersonal power transactions (Clapton, 1999, p. 195).

The practices of penalty are seen in the biblical motif of God as judge, where the ethical principle of utility judges that difference needs to be eliminated. Hence, the power of the “judge” is used over and against the other (Clapton, 1999, p. 195).

The practices of pathos are expressed in the biblical motifs of the Beatitudes, the Good Samaritan story, and the servant, where the ethical principles of

duty and virtue impel the carer to acts of compassion, mercy, pity and service. Hence, the benevolent power of the servant is used to benefit the other, and often to benefit their own salvation (Clapton, 1999, p. 195).

The practices of pathology can be identified in the biblical motifs of the teacher and healer, where duty and paternalism drive an agenda of categorisation and segregation. Hence, acts of power tend to be against others, to make things better (Clapton, 1999, p. 195).

The philosophies can align their practices with the biblical motifs of enabler and liberator, where autonomy and justice principles underpin the assertion of rights, which are advocated on behalf of others, for the benefit of the other (Clapton, 1999, p. 195).

Whilst Clapton argues that all of these practices are still operational, she has a vision of a transformatory ethic of integrality, where controlling institutions and roles are replaced by "informality, acceptance and mystery"; where "philial love", "Sophia-wisdom" and "companionship" are embraced; where "the retrieval and reclamation of an alternative political vision of community…is based upon a "Logic of Democracy"; where there can be a "reconciliation of care and justice", that encourages "acceptance, grace, mutuality, trust, forgiveness and unconditional affection", which develops "the capacity to be a moral witness" (Clapton, 1999, p. 383). This vision is a possibility with which I heartily concur, as an alternative to the hegemonic power of hierarchy and patriarchy.

The claims of business

In the 2005 UCQ annual report (p. 4), the adage "no margin, no mission" was used in reference to "good stewardship". The saying, "no margin, no mission", which evokes the tension between money and mission, could be read in two ways. Firstly, the saying implies that mission is only carried out with a financial surplus, which is generated by the "business" of the organisation. This view implies that mission is an optional extra that can only happen when there are

sufficient funds to do so. Such a view is incompatible with the UCA's understanding of mission as being fundamental to all of the agencies of the Church. Hence, margins without mission are meaningless; or, no mission, no nothing. Alternatively, "no margin, no mission" may be understood as promoting the view that for mission to continue, services need to do more than break even, they need to create a surplus, so that increasing costs can be covered, and provisions for the future accrued, and new missional work can be started. This alternative reading of the saying is a reminder that missional work needs to be businesslike. Good stewardship of both financial and human resources is essential, which for an organisation the size of UCQ requires good governance.

Governance

Van den Berghe and De Ridder (1999, p. 20) offered a broad definition for corporate governance, "doing the right things and doing things right". Hough, McGregor-Lowndes and Ryan (2004b, p. 494) described this dual approach of "conformance" and "performance", as metaphorically "flying with two wings". In addition, there are two broad trajectories in the governance field that Hough, McGregor-Lowndes and Ryan (2004a, p. 528) have identified: agency theory and stewardship theory. Agency theory separates managers from the shareholders on the assumption that they have different competing interests. Shareholders are interested in the welfare of the organisation, whilst managers are only interested in their career. Agency theory suggests that shareholders have an intrinsically negative view of their agents, the managers. Stewardship theory assumes that shareholders and managers have a shared interest in the stewardship of organisational resources. Managers are selected on the basis of their agreement to work toward the vision, mission, values and goals of the organisation. Hence, stewardship theory has an intrinsically positive view of managers. The UCA and UCQ seem to both fit with the broad parameters of the stewardship theory of governance, with an element of "agency" suspicion being present, because nobody is perfect.

At the conclusion of a survey of international for-profit corporate governance models Van den Berghe and De Ridder (1999: 12) write, “For the time being, there is no such thing as an ideal model”. Barrett (2000, p. 2) said that despite the lack of a “single accepted definition”, corporate governance encompassed “how an organisation is managed, its corporate and other structures, its culture, its policies and strategies, and the ways in which it deals with its various stakeholders”. Hence, to achieve these goals implies that each organisation will be unique because of the diversity of stakeholders, of cultures, and of management styles. However, there are broad similarities as Carver (1997, p. 5) has observed, that for-profit, non-profit and government boards “are alike in that they all bear ultimate responsibility for organizational activity and accomplishment.” The difference between for profit and not for profit organisations is not the need to make a profit nor to be governed well, but that nonprofits do not receive feedback from the market via a “rigorous market test” (Carver, 1997, p. 7). Therefore there is no real measure of efficiency or effectiveness.

Carver (1997, p. xviii) says that the primary tasks for a board are to “project a vision, infuse an organization with mission, bid a staff to be all it can be, and make itself grow a little in the process.” This focus on vision, mission and action is echoed in Carver’s explanation regarding Policy formation. “The essence of any organization lies in what it believes, what it stands for, and what and how it values. An organization’s works, rather than its words, are the telling assessment of its beliefs” (Carver, 1997, p. 22). The identification of the connection between beliefs, values and action, and their congruity, implies that the work of a board is intrinsically ethical work. Therefore, for a board to fulfil its role ethically for a UCA human service organisation would imply that the vision, mission and actions of a service group would need to be congruent with the vision, mission and action of the UCA. However in a situation where there is a gross incongruity between what the church wants and the behaviour of its agencies, the UCA retains the power to intervene to protect the interests of the Church (UCA Regulations 3.5.34 (e) (iii), p. 71). Ultimately the authority of the UCQ Board is a delegated authority.

Van den Berghe and De Ritter (1999, p. 27ff) identified six different models of corporate governance, which offered “a certain chronological angle” to the development of corporations and governance models: “entrepreneurial capitalism”, where policy and governance is controlled by the entrepreneurial owner; “banking capitalism”, where control is exerted by external financiers; “managerial capitalism”, where shareholder diversity is so great or shareholder interest is so low, that managers assume control; “institutional capitalism”, where control is dominated by shareholders; “reference shareholding, where shareholders play a greater, long term role in strategic development for the organisation; and finally the “democratic corporate model”, where there is a democratic engagement with the “knowledge worker”, rather than the shareholder, and power is devolved as close as possible to work teams. In accordance with the descriptions of van den Berghe and De Ritter, the model that has the closest fit to the UCA is the democratic corporate model, because of its interrelated councils of shared leadership, and its consensus decision-making approach. For UCQ, the managerial capitalism model seems to be the nearest fit, because the size and complexity of its activities are so great that the “shareholders”, the members of the UCA, seem to find it difficult to keep up to date. The line of accountability between UCQ and the UCA is primarily regular reporting to the Council of Synod.

Hough, McGregor-Lowndes and Ryan (2004b, p. 529) conclude that boards of religious, not for profit organisations play a crucial role in ensuring that mission “permeate(s) every aspect of the organisation’s operations” by: selecting a Chief Executive Officer on the basis of the organisation’s mission; and that evaluating programs, making financial allocations, adequate financial resourcing, external funding considerations, financial investment, policy development, and human resource management should all have primary regard for the mission of the organisation. Hough et al. (2004b) note the “potential advantages of consumer representation” on the boards of human service organisations, because it can lead to “improve(d) service responsiveness and help in overcoming marginalisation”.

Barrett (2000, p. 2) asserted that governance and management are not the same. Governance has a focus on overall “policy direction and culture”, whilst managers focus on administration, supervision and facilitation of organisational goals.

Management and Leadership

Management and leadership are different from each other. According to DuBrin, Dalglish and Miller (2006, p. 4) managers plan, organise and control, as well as lead through influence, inspiration and motivation of others. Parry (1996, p. 26) asserted that the concerns of management are transactional, relating to order, control, conformance, stability and performance, whilst the concerns of leadership are relational and transformational. If management is focussed on the technical aspects of a business, and leadership is focussed on change for the better for people, then both aspects are required for an effective business. This is supported by the findings of research into defining excellence in human service organisations, carried out by Cheryl Harvey (1998), who concluded that there are seven dimensions for excellence: purpose, serving client needs, commitments from staff, commitments to staff, flexibility and adaptability, internal processes, congruence and striving. Board members, managers, leaders and workers need a structure for these dimensions to be fulfilled.

Structure

Robbins, Bergman, Stagg and Coulter (2003, p. 274) defined structure as “the formal framework by which job tasks are divided, grouped and coordinated”. Robbins et al. (2003, pp. 275- 281) discussed six different frameworks to organise work: “work specialisation”, where the focus is on one element of a job; “departmentalisation”, where common tasks are grouped together; “chain of command”, where there is a delegation of authority, usually a worker will report to only one manager; “span of control”, where the limiting factor is the number of workers a manager can control, the greater the span the flatter the structure; “centralisation and decentralisation”, a continuum where there is a

trend to decentralise from hierarchies to team based structures as workers are better educated and competent; and “formalisation”, where there is an increase in the standardisation of rules and procedures and a corresponding decrease in worker control and discretion. In UCQ I have witnessed an increase in formalisation and chains of command, and a decrease in departmentalisation, hence some staff are getting more variety in work, under increased delegations of authority, but less discretion, creativity and control over how they do their work. Simply, doing more work with fewer resources.

Robbins et al. (2003, pp. 281) compared two broad designs for organisations; “mechanistic and organic”. Mechanistic organisations have highly formalised rigid departments, clear chains of command, narrow spans of control and centralisation. They are hierarchical, command and control systems. Robbins et al. (2003, p. 284) noted that organisations with “more than 2000 employees tend to be mechanistic”. UCQ has around 14,500 staff. At the other end of the design continuum are organic organisations which are characterised by less formalised cross functional teams, the free flow of information, wide spans of control and decentralisation. They are team based workplaces with greater autonomy and greater accountability, and are “successful in for profit and not for profit organisations” (Robbins et al. 2003, p. 288). Examples of successful organic organisations can be found around the world, in VISA International (Hock, 1999), Semco in Brazil (Semler, 1993) and worker cooperatives.

Harding (1998, p. 117) has noted that modern management was primarily a product of the USA, which was developed from the work of Max Weber in the early 20th Century. Managerialism has become an ideology driven by the often undisclosed assumptions that managers are absolutely necessary; usually “men” who are “rational”; who require “formal organisational machinery”, which aims to coordinate and control people on a large scale to achieve stability; and to complete tasks in an amoral way (Harding, 1998, pp. 115-120). This form of management has created its own technologies without the scientific rigor it purports to represent. As a result, management theories often do not work in practice, because managers and workers are not always rational in their behaviour (Harding, 1998, p. 118). Unfortunately

managerialism now pervades our society, and we might be better off ignoring the managerial experts from the USA, and develop organisational structures that are consistent with our vision, mission, beliefs and values.

Although UCQ has enough staff to expect it to be hierarchical, maybe there are organic ways to devolve power and responsibility throughout the organisation. The success of organic structures, including the UCA's version, indicates that hierarchy is not necessarily a foregone conclusion. Maybe hierarchy is just a powerful illusion promulgated by oligarchies to preserve power and control?

The organisation as a locus of power

In essence, structures give form to and facilitate the transactions of power between people in organisations. Ivancevich, Olekalns and Matteson (1999, p. 388) identified five interpersonal bases of power, which can be mediated through structures or through people. "Legitimate power" is structurally conferred, through a person's formal position within an organisation and constitutes their authority. It is sometimes called positional power. "Reward power" is an adjunct to legitimate power, where extra money, promotions or gifts are given for worker compliance (Ivancevich et al. 1999, p. 389). "Coercive power" is the power to punish, which can come from peer pressure and or from supervisors. "Expert power" is the power a person derives from having expertise in a field essential to the organisation. "Referent power" is another form of personal power, which derived from a person's personality or behavioural style; the power of charisma.

Ivancevich et al. (1999, p. 395) declared that "managers at any level in the organisation can increase the power of subordinates", through a process of "empowerment". Empowerment can be achieved by identifying the conditions that have disempowered workers, followed by the removal or the remediation of those conditions. Ivancevich et al. do not say how they would decide what the disempowering conditions were, nor do they explicitly acknowledge that all workers have personal power, even though it is implicit to the process.

Rollo May (1972) promoted the view that all people have personal power, the power to be, but other people place or create barriers to the exercise of that power. May (1972, pp.105-112) discussed five different kinds of relational power: exploitative, manipulative, competitive, nutrient and integrative. ”Exploitative power always presupposes violence or the threat of violence” (May, 1972, p. 105). Exploitative power is power used against another person, which denies the personal power of another and asserts the power of the exploiter. This is similar to the power to punish mentioned above. “Manipulative power” (May, 1972, p. 106) is power over another person via non-violent coercion or persuasion, which denies the personal power of another by the manipulator’s power of persuasion. This is similar to the reward power mentioned above. “Competitive power” (May, 1972, p. 107) is power used against another person. This power to compete can be found in positive and negative forms. Competitive power is expressed negatively when one’s opponent is diminished as a result of an interaction, (a win/lose situation), whereas if ones opponent benefits from the interaction in a win/win situation competitive power is expressed positively. The fourth kind of power is “nutrient power” (May, 1972, p. 108), that is, power exercised for the benefit of another. There is a benevolent denial of the personal power of another. This power may be paternal, maternal; the power of benign monarchy, patriarchy and hierarchy. “Integrative power” (May, 1972, p. 109) is power exercised with another person. It is when our powers combine that there are possibilities for growth and change not just for the participants, but also for others. This is the power of people’s movements such as the peaceful resistance of Gandhi and his followers in India, the removal of Marcos in the Philippines, and Nelson Mandela and the end of apartheid in South Africa.

May (1972, p. 111) asserted that all five kinds of power are potentially present in all of us; the difference is that we may choose to use our power in different ways at different times. The challenge that exists, for those who desire to live the ethical life, is to be critically aware of what kind of power is being used in a particular interaction, and why. Love can be found in three types of relational power; in the win/win competitive relationship, the nutrient relationship and the

integrative relationship; *philia* (friendship)*, philanthropia* (human kindness) *and agapao* (showing love by action) can be found. Because the five types of relational power are not of equal value, May (1972, p. 112) wanted to encourage the deliberate use of the more positive forms of power, more often. Integrative power is the most desirable, followed by nutrient power and win/win competitive power. Hence, managers cannot increase the power of workers, but through careful listening and the use of integrative power, barriers to transformation would be removed from workers and managers alike.

Conclusion

The identity of UCQ is not clear; rather its identity appears to be quite turbid. This turbidity comes from the competing claims of the UCA, the Governments as funders, the education and practices of the professions, the financial expectations of being in business, and the expectations of community. The result of this turbidity is that the authenticity of UCQ can be understood only in terms of its congruity with the above-mentioned competing claims. However not all claims are of equal value. UCQ needs to firmly anchor itself to the reference point of the mission of the UCA, in an endeavour to discern its identity, and by extension its authenticity, in an applied ethics dialogue with Government, the professions, business, and the community. The questions of history; of how power is transacted between manager and worker, between worker and worker, between worker and client needs to be addressed; of who are the legitimate stake holders; and ultimately what is a better structure to support and promote answers to these questions.

An important question that emerges here is how are the beliefs and values of the UCA congruent with the beliefs and values of UCQ? How does the Basis of Union inform the practices of UCQ? More broadly, what is the relationship between UCQ and the UCA? These questions will be explored in chapter four.

Chapter 4: Congruity between UCQ and the UCA

So far in this essay there has been an exploration of the authenticity of the UCA and UCQ. Chapter three explored the moral horizon of identity formation for UCQ in its relationships with governments, the professions and business. The result was that the complexity of relationships created turbidity of identity for UCQ. I contend that UCQ needs to rediscover its "anchor" in the UCA, so that it can withstand the impositions of multiple expectations, and retain an ethical focus on its work.

Therefore the issue of congruity between the UCA and UCQ which emerged in chapter two will be discussed now.

The following questions will be addressed. How are the beliefs and values of the UCA congruent with the beliefs and values of UCQ? How does the Basis of Union inform the practices of UCQ?

Taylor on Articulation

In the above discussion regarding authenticity, it was noted that the process of listening to understand, engaging in dialogue and reflection, to discern "differences and convergences" was called articulation (Abbey, 2000, p. 162). The fusion of horizons facilitated by articulation, opened up zones of meaning to the plurality of difference and diversity, and enabled the transition "from a politics of recognition of identity to a politics of the good" (Orlie, 2004, p. 157). This transition means that the question of "who I am" is replaced by the question of "what we consider is good and right to do and to become" (Orlie, 2004, p. 159). Abbey (2000, p. 41) explained that articulation is "bringing into the light of awareness that which is unspoken but presupposed". There are six separate but related functions of articulation (Abbey, 2000, pp. 41- 46). The first is that articulation would deepen understanding of current moral values by

uncovering underpinning beliefs. Secondly, articulation would reveal the plurality of moral values and their sources. Thirdly, articulation could enable a rational evaluation of moral goods, which could counter the possibility of moral relativism. Fourthly, a clear articulation of ethical engagement could counter other approaches to morality. Fifthly, articulation can empower people to be committed to the strong evaluations that "move" them. Sixthly, articulation provides the opportunity for immanent critique. The process of articulation can never be finalised because of the contingence of life and human relations. Therefore "articulations are contingent expressions" and as such ought not be posited as normative, but always open to critique (Pinkard, 2004, p. 196).

Taylor has provided a framework for the prioritisation of goods that are discovered during the process of articulation. Life goods are what make life worth living; for example "freedom, reason, piety, authenticity, courage, benevolence" (Abbey, 2000, p.47). However, all values/ moral goods are not equal. Taylor (Abbey, 2000, p. 17) observed that people make "strong evaluations" as they prioritise their values. We give a higher priority to values we feel strongly about.

Constitutive goods are those moral goods that we feel strongly about (our strong evaluations), except that they have independent value as well. In other words, they are not moral goods just because I say they are. There is a shared corporate understanding that they are constitutive of a moral society. These are the moral goods that move us, that fuse our emotions, knowledge and action, such as love and respect (Abbey, 2000, p. 47). Taylor goes one step further to suggest that for some people there is a hypergood. A hypergood is a pre-eminent constitutive good, which becomes "the central feature of an individual's identity…against which individuals measure their direction in life" (Abbey, 2000, p. 36).

In summary, as UCQ explores its multiple congruities in dialogue with stakeholders, a prioritisation of goods will emerge along with a fusion of moral horizons, to appreciate the life goods of each and understand the constitutive goods of the organisation and others. I suspect that in the context of this

discussion the hypergood of UCQ is found in the UCA, with its central call to love. Maybe the constitutive goods of the UCA are encapsulated in its mission of worship, witness and service, on the journey toward unity, as articulated in the Basis of Union.

How does the Basis of Union inform the practices of UCQ?

All staff sign an employment contract which declares that they will work within the ethos or the values of the UCA. An entry point to the values of the UCA might be to explore what the Church has to say about itself. The Basis of Union, as the foundational document of the Uniting Church in Australia, articulates the mission of the church in terms of beliefs, vision and values. In Chapter one I identified four themes that help to explicate that mission: the themes of church, uniting, journey, and worship-witness-service. I would like to suggest that these four themes that emerge from the Basis of Union may assist UCQ, as the missional arm of the Church, to determine its congruent connection to the UCA, and by extension discover its authentic identity as a provider of community services in the name of the Church.

Because I have already discussed the beliefs and mission of the Uniting Church in chapter one, I will not repeat the detail, but I will focus on the implications of the themes as they relate to human service delivery.

The implications of Church

In the Basis of Union the word “Church” is used in two ways. Firstly, the specific descriptor Uniting “Church” appears in every paragraph, and secondly in a more generic sense church is mentioned in at least five paragraphs. The Uniting Church is described as participating in the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic church (para.1, 3), a fellowship of the Holy Spirit, a place of worship, witness, and service (para.3), where membership is obtained through baptism (para.12) and the church is described as the people of God (para.18).

The Church is essentially a “volunteer” organisation composed of people, whose purpose as a faith community is to follow Jesus and to love as He loved. The Church would continue to be church regardless of finance and or property, because the church is constituted in Christ, and sustained by the Spirit. Whenever people gather together for worship, witness and service in the name of Christ, the Church is manifest.

UCQ has a mixture of paid and unpaid staff. It too is a faith community, although not necessarily a religious faith, but a practical faith. The work of UCQ is dependent on finance and property for it to continue in its present form. Even though worship services are conducted as UCQ activities where people engage in worship, witness and service, the overall purpose of UCQ is to give witness to the *agape* love of Christ through its delivery of community services

The foundation of the church is the person of Jesus the Christ (Basis of Union, 1977, para. 3). Three core beliefs surround this foundation, incarnation, resurrection and trinity.

Incarnation

Incarnation means to “enflesh” and refers to the belief that Jesus was God made human. The radical idea was that rather than God being separated from creation, distant and aloof; God became present, became one of us, and was born, lived and died as a human being.

This understanding of divine presence can be made evident in UCQ through work that is not separated, distant or aloof; rather UCQ ought to be engaged in the real lives of people of all ages from birth till death; work that is personal, present and committed.

Resurrection

In essence resurrection declares that death is not the end; that love will prevail over evil; that new life is possible starting today. We do not have to wait until we die to enjoy love, joy, peace, faith and hope.

In human services the key words are change for the better and transformation in people's lives. Faith is required. When human service workers use certain approaches with clients, there is no guarantee of a predicted outcome. It is an act of practical faith on behalf of workers that when certain practices are employed specific outcomes may occur. Working toward transformation with people requires faith. Together we can be co-workers in the purposes of peace, participating in a future and a hope for all. Therefore, UCQ, as a community of hope can embrace change as staff pursue and advocate for reconciliation and justice; change for the better in people's lives.

Trinity

Trinity is the belief that God in God's totality is completely unknowable, but God has been revealed to humanity as three persons, as Father/Mother, as Son/Jesus the Christ and as ever-present Spirit. It is in the image of God that we are created. Our creation was an act of divine free will, hence people have the gift of free will, to choose God or not. Trinity declares that this God is relational, inhabits relationships that are characterised by grace, relationships that invite participation, rather than domination. Grace refers to a particular sort of love, a love that is a self-giving, an unconditional positive regard for the other.

The human service work of UCQ is relational work, a participation with people, where staff are asked to be themselves and to give of themselves, even when they do not like the person receiving care. Therefore all people are to be valued, not just the most marginalised, with whom compassionate, caring, non-judgemental, forgiving, gracious, life-enriching relationships can be found. An organisation run by grace cannot be a punitive culture or a domination culture, because grace is the reverse of the natural response of revenge and power abuse systems. Grace is counterintuitive, always willing to

give opportunity for repentance, forgiveness and restitution that is, for reconciliation. To run a “gracious” organisation would be a significant challenge, balancing the tensions of freedom and responsibility, of learning from mistakes, of vulnerability and risk.

The image of God

Some of the implications of an understanding of the Image of God amongst people are an acknowledgement that each person has dignity and is of value; that human diversity can be embraced; and that Image-of-God relationships transcend and relativise race, class, gender, sexual orientation and ability.

In summary, the implications for human service delivery that may be gleaned from the theme of “church”, are that, people are more important than property; that being present with people is foundational; that change for the better is possible here and now; that staff can give of themselves in the context of practical faith, as staff and clients seek transformation together; and that all people ought to be respected.

The implications of uniting

The second theme is summed up in the word “uniting”, which implies that there is unfinished work; that the process is more important than the product; to be uniting is to be open to constant reform; and to acknowledge a diversity of gifts, where all have a part.

The implications for human service delivery could be that UCQ embrace and celebrate the diversity of people and their abilities and disabilities. UCQ can acknowledge that life is an ongoing process. There is always more to experience and learn. There is complexity. Life is a journey of becoming.

Two distinctive features of the Uniting Church are shared leadership through interrelated councils, and shared decision-making through the consensus

decision-making approach. These two features present significant challenges to the hierarchical structures of UCQ.

The implications of journey

The third theme of journey develops a picture of travelling together in relationship with each other into what may be changing and uncertain futures. There are some significant journeys in the Hebrew and Christian scriptures. As mentioned in chapter one the journeys of Abram, Israel, and Jesus are significant. These journeys are stories of faith in action, of covenanting together with each other, and of the spiritual and ethical quest, to be consistent between beliefs and actions.

Not only does the Abram story foreshadow the tension between people and property, but the story also highlights the place of faith in life journeys. Practitioners in human services believe that by delivering services in a certain way that there will be a particular outcome. This is a practical act of faith, because human service work can be unpredictable and outcomes uncertain. Practitioners put faith in their training, in methodology, in their skill and in their client.

The journey of the people Israel was the exodus of the Hebrew people from Egypt into the desert. In the desert at the foot of a mountain God made a promised agreement, a covenant, with the people. Human service workers enter into implicit covenants with co-workers and with clients. They “promise” certain behaviours, often expressed in Codes of Ethics, which are meant to bring transformation into people’s lives.

The third journey is the journey of Jesus. This journey acts as an introduction to the fourth theme. Jesus was a man who maintained a covenantal relationship with God even though it cost him his life. When asked, in Matthew’s Gospel, which commandment was the greatest Jesus responded by saying, the first is to “Love God with your whole being and a second is like it, Love your neighbour as yourself. On these two commands hang all the law

and the prophets" (Matthew 22:34-40 adapted). By saying this Jesus brings our personal, private, faith-life into the domain of our public behaviour. This is a call for consistency between what we believe and what we do. This is the task of an ethical life lived out in relationship with others.

In summary, the implications of "journey" for UCQ are that staff work together in the context of practical faith; with implicit agreements to collaborate; and to be ethical.

The implications of worship, witness and service

The fourth theme of Gospel-word-deed and similar words such as witness, service, work, action, mission and servant, occur in at least 12 out of the 18 paragraphs of the Basis of Union. In broad terms this is about beliefs, values and actions.

When people work together there needs to be some shared understanding of beliefs and values. Most organisations use spiritual terms such as vision, mission, beliefs and values to develop a shared sense of purpose and meaning for the work in which they engage.

When staff engage in human service delivery they are engaging in the mission of the Church, they represent and re-present the Church in the community, (whether they believe it or not), they are active parts of the body of Christ in the world.

What might a congruent ethos be for human service practice? A practice informed by the four themes of Church, Uniting, Journey and Gospel-word-deed, from the Basis of Union.

Our primary concern is for people.
People are more important than property.
The process is more important than the product.
Valued relationships are at the heart of our process.

We are in the process of becoming.
We celebrate diversity in our common humanity.
We are on a journey together. It will not be easy, but we are not alone.
The journey is ethical and relational, as we strive for consistency between our beliefs, values and actions.

Maybe the above statements could be integrated for UCQ staff as:
UCQ affirms that it belongs to the UCA on the way to transformation of people and society. May we be open to critically evaluate our own practices in light of the gospel, as we engage in learning from others, on our journey to integrate beliefs, values and actions, in the pursuit of peace.

Despite that fact that UCQ operates in the name of the UCA, and that UCQ can give witness to the love of Christ through its community services, is there a legitimate expectation that UCQ be more like the UCA, or even be considered to be Church?

Is UCQ church?

The Basis of Union (1977, para. 3) identifies the Church "as the fellowship of the Holy Spirit" who confess that Jesus is Lord of life and new life; a people who are called to be "a fellowship of reconciliation", where "the diverse gifts of its members are used for the building up of the whole", to be an instrument of Christ, not just in this life, but also in the one to come.

The recurring theme of worship, witness and service articulates the broad parameters by which the worshipping community of the UCA might be identified. Is UCQ congruent with these parameters? Service is a foundational identifier for UCQ. It is through the service of UCQ that the workers give witness to the power of being present with people, work towards change for the better with people and the significance of loving relationships. This form of witness is not the evangelism of orthodoxy; rather it is the evangelism of

orthopraxis. Worship may be understood as giving praise and thanks to God, which in essence is the public expression of heart -felt belief. Maybe there is an element of worship that, in essence, is demonstrated when unconditional positive regard for the other is practised as heart felt belief.

The UCA and UCQ both give witness to the gospel. The UCA gives witness to the gospel through worship and service, whilst UCQ gives witness to the gospel through service. The linkage of UCQ through its Board to the Council of Synod does not appear to be close enough for congregations to be confronted by the work of UCQ, and UCQ is not close enough to congregations to be reminded of the their place in the church. Congregations are the only council of the Church considered to be "the embodiment in one place of the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, worshipping, witnessing and serving as a fellowship of the Spirit in Christ" (Basis of Union, para. 15 (a)).

However, the UCA has made provision for Congregations and programs to have a connection via a "covenant agreement" for a "support relationship and pastoral care association" (By Law Q 2.2.6 (b). If this provision was taken up and honoured more often, then UCQ would not appear to be hanging by a thread of accountability for its witness and service in the name of the Church. On the other hand, congregations need to learn new skills of active support and pastoral care of the people and programs of UCQ, without having the control they once had, when they initiated some of the community services.

Another active way that congregations can contribute to the work of UCQ is through prayer; prayers such as the epiclesis and intercession.

Epiclesis

Both the worshipping community and the service community of the church give witness to the presence of God in the world through love as grace, and reconciliation as peace making, and transformation to new life. The worshipping community can bless the service community through epicletic

prayer, that is to pray for the Holy Spirit to be present and to make real the body of Christ in the world (as the church does in ordination and eucharist). Similarly the service community of the church can bless the worshipping community of the church by faithfully presenting the reality of the world for intercessory prayer and response.

Conclusion

The above material shows that UCQ can be a congruent expression of the mission and message of the UCA, through witness and service. However the hierarchical structure of UCQ, and the "distance" that UCQ programs are from congregations, are incongruent expressions of the beliefs of the UCA. These incongruities cloud the identity of UCQ and impact upon its authenticity, which in turn affects UCQ's relationships with other stakeholders.

The next chapter will explore some possible ways forward for the UCA and UCQ.

Chapter 5: A way forward together

In chapter four I argued that UCQ was congruent with the mission and message of the UCA, except for its structure and its connection to congregations. These incongruities have a negative impact on the authenticity of UCQ, which contributes to the turbidity of relationship UCQ has with other stakeholders.

Now I will focus on whether the incongruities of structure and ethical connection are issues that can be resolved. I will discuss ways forward for the structure of UCQ. Any implementation of a way forward would depend on ethical leadership and ethical decision-making processes. An exploration of these two important elements of change will be the substance of subsequent essays of my research.

A way forward, structurally.

The structure of the UCA is a system of interrelated councils of shared decision-making and shared leadership. It is not a hierarchical system, nor is it strictly democratic. It is more than democratic and I have suggested the theocratic structure could be considered for the purposes of UCQ, as an anchored democracy. The anchor for the UCA is the gospel understood in the person of Jesus the Christ. The anchor for UCQ is the UCA and its mission of worship, witness and service. At present UCQ operates hierarchically. Its top down approach is at odds with the organisation in which it is embedded.

Can hierarchy be an ethical response to the gospel of Jesus Christ? The UCA answer to this question is no. Can hierarchy be an ethical response to the worship witness and service of the UCA? There are several questions that can be derived from the above chapters, which need to be considered.

The primary consideration is how is power mediated? Who has what power and how is it used? Are there a breadth of representation and a flow of nutrient and integrative power amongst stakeholders? What is the flow of accountability - up, down or both?

Is there a clearly understood separation of powers? McBride (2005) has suggested that the Hebrew Torah articulated a separation of powers between prophets, priests and kings. In the Westminster system of government followed in Australia, there is a separation of powers between legislators, the judiciary and law enforcement. I want to suggest that there be a separation of powers between the government, the church and community services. This separation means that all three powers need to work together for the benefit of the community, but either one ought not to control what the other ones do. In the context of resourcing and support, respectful accountability can occur without control. Therefore the nature of the relationship between congregations and local programs, and the relationship between governments and UCQ, cannot be controlling.

Which group is the embodiment of the mission of the UCA and which groups resource that mission? Structurally there are analogous groupings of activity between the UCA and UCQ. Congregations have a local focus, as do locally embedded programs, where the Church Council is like the coordination and management of local programs. Presbyteries have a regional focus on the resourcing and support of congregations, as do the regional offices and regional hubs of most of the local activities of UCQ. The state wide Synod is like the state offices of Blue Care, Uniting Health Care, Lifeline Community Care and Crossroads. The national Assembly is like the Directorate of UCQ. I would suggest that similar to the congregation being the embodiment of the church in one place, local activities of the community services are the embodiment in one place of the mission of the UCA. All the other structures around this work ought to be resourcing and supportive.

How is the organisation open to reform? How does the organisation learn? Does the organisation listen to and honour the dissenting minority? How are

decisions made? How are leaders chosen? These questions which relate to how power is exercised will be explored in subsequent essays on leadership and decision-making processes.

There are at least four scenarios to explore in the consideration of congruent structure and ethical connection of UCQ with the UCA; to maintain the status quo; to effect a complete separation; for UCQ to adopt the structure of the UCA; or create a way for the two organisations to maximise the creative tension that exists.

Maintain the status quo

To maintain the status quo would be to do nothing. The present questions of identity, authenticity and relational congruities would remain unresolved. The tensions between stakeholders would probably increase to breaking point.
The primary question of who has what power and how is it used, would remain unanswered. Even though this option would be the easiest, it is also unethical and untenable.

Effect a complete separation

Another simple solution may be to effect a complete separation. This approach is consistent with Grierson's (1991, p. 18) observation that the church as a catalyst for community services, ought to relinquish those services back to the community once they were established. This could mean that the UCA seek a private buyer, or the UCA could gift the property to the existing operators, or the UCA could offer the services back to the government. In so doing, the church would not become encumbered by large community services. UCQ is a very large community service provider, and any relinquishment would be very expensive, either as a cost to the departing

agencies, or as a loss to the UCA. However, any disbursement of funds or assets would need to be consistent with charitable purposes and in accordance with the UCA By Law Q2.2.7 (b) which says that any transfers of funds or assets to another body would require the approval of the Commissioner of Taxation, the Queensland Government, and the Council of Synod. Again the primary question of who has what power and how is it used remains unanswered as the two organisations go there their separate ways.

I am not convinced that a separation would be desirable or needed, when so much of what UCQ does is compatible with the mission of the UCA.

Adopt the UCA structure

The important elements of the UCA structure are shared decision-making and shared leadership through a system of interrelated councils that enables people to worship, witness and serve. This requires nutrient and integrative power.

It may be possible for UCQ to adopt the structure of interrelated councils. As discussed above, it is possible to realign the local, regional, state wide groups of UCQ in a similar way to the UCA. My observation is that this is how most of the UCQ divisions are organised. The primary question of who has what power and how is it used, now needs to be considered.

Currently, in the hierarchy of UCQ the power and authority moves downwards from individual managers to groups, and the accountability moves upwards from groups to individuals. There is a level of inevitability for hierarchies to exist in organisations, because of the stratification of staff awards, with increasing pay scales as levels of responsibility increase. To ascribe power and authority commensurate with income is an inadequate definition of power. As mentioned in Chapter two, although some power is positional, most power is personal and relational.

Group decision-making by consensus can be time consuming and requires planning and preparation. Good quality, strongly held decisions can be made, but contentious issues can take a long time to work through. Group decision-making does moderate the excesses of some, and tends to the median of the capacity of the group. Group decision-making provides an opportunity for all voices to be heard, especially the dissenting minority, and as such is an expression of integrative power. This style of decision-making could be an advantage for UCQ in hearing from all stakeholders more often; however decisions about contentious issues may need to taken by designated leaders, but only after discussion in council.

Group oversight is an important principle of interrelated councils. Each council is limited in its “field of view”. People in leadership positions are elected by their peers to lead for a specified time. In this way leadership is shared and leaders are accountable to the people who elected them. The power and authority stays within the group, and accountability stays within the group. I suspect that elected leadership and group oversight may be difficult for UCQ, because of the stratified pay scales and responsibilities as specified in contracts.

Organisational power can be found in contracts. John Ralston Saul (2001, p. 109- 112) argued that the free ethical participation of workers to work is militated against by the fiction that a corporation is a person before the law. This fictive person is able to silence staff on the basis of contracted loyalty; the power of the contract that binds staff to key indicators of conformance and performance, which renders the work unethical. The word “unethical” is used because when a worker is focussed on fulfilling the “letter of the law” in the contract, they are unable or unwilling to make adjustments for the vicissitudes of real life. Contracts can represent the power to manipulate and exploit.

It may be that the UCA has an advantage when exercising shared leadership because voluntary members do not need a contract, and almost all of the

people in specified ministries are paid the same stipend. This would make it easier to move in and out of different roles.

On balance, it would appear that the adoption of the UCA structure could be problematic for UCQ, because of the expectations of workers on stratified pay scales and responsibilities. Maybe UCQ can find a structure that facilitates nutrient and integrative power between congregation and program, supervisor and worker, worker and worker, and between worker and client; in a stratified workplace.

Create a new way

The challenge for UCQ is to find a structure that is compatible with the mission and message of the UCA; a structure that facilitates nutrient and integrative power, for people engaged in orthopraxis, on a shared journey to transformation.

Limerrick, Cunnington and Crowther (1998) presented an overview of organisational management in terms of four blueprints. The first is the classical blueprint born of the industrial revolution and was dominant until the 1930's. Organisations were functional and mechanistic. Management was hierarchical, stratified according to functions, focussed on person to person control, with a view to efficiency and productivity (Limerick et al. 1998, pp. 29-31). First blueprint organisations are still operating.

The second blueprint emerged in the 1930's due to social science research. Organisations adopted an organic approach with interlocking work groups, where management played a supportive role, through democratic leadership, the facilitation of goal setting, with a view to self actualisation and social support (Limerick et al. 1998, pp. 30, 32-35). Second blueprint organisations are still operating.

The first and second blueprints were focussed on the internal structures and behaviours of the organisation and its workers. The third blueprint, developed in the mid 1960's, was a response to contingency theory, which recognised that factors outside of an organisation's control had a major bearing on profitability. The interrelatedness and embeddedness of people, in workplaces, in society, in cultures and in the world; prompted business to adopt an open systems model of organisation. Organisations became complex matrices based on the principles of differentiation and integration, analysis and synthesis of rational and diagnostic data, with a view to self regulating teams (Limerick et al. 1998, pp. 30, 35- 41).

An example of a third blueprint organisation as an open ended system may be found in the work of Dee Hock, the founder of VISA International. Hock (1999) repudiated the common command and control approach to organisation and governance and posited an approach that is a blending of competition and cooperation, of order and chaos, and was more compatible with the lived experience of the whole person. He called his organic, evolutionary model, a chaordic organisation (Hock, 1999, p. 3).

Limerick, Cunnington and Crowther (1998, pp. vii-ix) observed that corporate organisations are not becoming post-corporate, they are becoming corporate bureaucracies, which kill their members, albeit unintentionally. They have posited a new collaborative organisation with a focus on becoming socially sustainable, acknowledging the centrality of love in social action. Limerick et al. (1998, pp. 243- 251) have put the emphasis on the worker as actor rather than the worker as objective variable; focussed on process rather than structure; and emphasised contextualisation rather than universalism. These ideas are expressed in the fourth blueprint.

In the late 1980's, the fourth blueprint was born of a critique of open systems and its underlying assumptions of interdependence, openness, unity, rationality, objectivity and teamwork, which were observed to be "counter-productive under conditions of discontinuity" (Limerick et al. 1998, p. 41). The fourth blueprint is a research based revision of organisational management.

Fourth blueprint organisations are collaborative and sustainable; structured by loosely coupled divisional networks and alliances; based on the principles of collaborative individualism and empowerment. Managers are social entrepreneurs; engaged in meaning making; are empathetic and proactive, with a view to social sustainability and ecological balance (Limerick et al. 1998, 30, 41- 46).

By taking Limerick et al. as a guide I suspect that the UCA is a second blueprint organisation, with its “anchored democracy”, organic structure of shared leadership and supportive decision-making processes, which promote self actualisation and social support through worship, witness and service. Similarly, UCQ could be seen as a mixture of the first and second blueprints. In terms of how decisions are made UCQ is hierarchical; and in terms of how service is provided, it is more democratic in its promotion of self actualisation and social support.

Therefore, I suggest that for UCQ to be an authentic expression of the mission of the UCA, it needs to explore an organic systems approach that can be focussed on witness and service. As mentioned above, Hock and Semler have run organisations successfully as an organic system. Hock’s (1999) application was in the financial industry, and Semler’s (1993) company was a manufacturing industry. Neither of these systems is completely comparable with UCQ. It would be more appropriate to explore the work of Russell Ackoff (1999, p. 218), because his model has an applicability in the private sector, in the public sector as well as the not-for-profit sector.

Ackoff (1999, p. 22) discussed four types of system: deterministic, animated, social and ecological. Whole systems are made up with parts. Each part contributes to the whole; each part is necessary but insufficient to the whole; each part is interrelated; and no one part can do it all (Ackoff, 1999, pp. 6- 8). Parts and wholes may or may not have purpose in an organisation. An entity has purpose when it can choose desirable means and ends in two or more environments (Ackoff, 1999, p. 21). Deterministic systems, such as a factory, have no purposeful entities (Ackoff, 1999, p. 23). (Profit and growth are not

purposes, because they are not choices; they are necessities.) Animated systems, such as the military or government bureauracies, have a purposeful whole, but non purposeful parts (Ackoff, 1999, p. 34). Social systems are purposeful as a whole and in parts (Ackoff, 1999, p. 25). Ackoff offers a model to do this. Ecological systems, such as planet earth, as a whole have no purpose, but serves the purposes of the parts, which may be animate or social systems (Ackoff, 1999, p. 29).

Ackoff (1999, p. 27) has suggested that autocratic (deterministic and animated systems) organisations have become troubled by increasing numbers of staff with an education, an increased dependency on technology, and the variety of demands from stakeholders. Ackoff's response (1999, pp. 38-39) is to posit a social systemic organisation: an organisation that is democratic, that has an internal market economy, that has a multidimensional organisational structure, that uses interactive planning, and contains a decision support system.

Ackoff's interactive planning

Interactive planning is not reactive, inactive or preactive; it is a creative process that seeks a more desirable future for all. The interactive planning process has six phases: a detailed analysis of the present situation; an ends plan or idealised vision; a practical means plan, a realistic mission, which is supported by an adequate and appropriate resourcing plan, followed by a plan for implementation, control and evaluation. The focus of this process is transformation rather than reform (Ackoff, 1999, p. 106). Mistakes are the ultimate source of learning and unlearning for this process. This implies that groups will not get it right the first time, if ever, because of the dynamic of human relationship and change. The process is the journey.

Ackoff on democracy

Ackoff (1999, p. 179) has asserted that the problems encountered in interactive planning can be solved through "democratic hierarchy". This

oxymoronic terminology is subtitled “the circular organisation”. Ackoff (1999, p. 181) has claimed that flat structures do not work because workers need coordination, but hierarchies do not need to be autocratic; they can provide circular accountability. I am concerned about the potential for confusion with the term “democratic hierarchy”. I would prefer to have a term that indicated how a person was accountable to those who were being served and accountable to those who gave service, regardless of whether that service was horizontal or vertical. The important principle here is that we are all responsible for our actions; that is, we are accountable for our use of power.

In addition, Ackoff (1999, p. 182) proposed the establishment of a “board” for every manager consisting of the manager; an immediate superior; immediate subordinates and other stakeholders. He recommends “boards” composed of seven to ten people who meet monthly and make decisions by consensus in principle, but by agreement in practice (Ackoff, 1999, pp. 184- 195). Ackoff’s “boards” may be thought of as a reference group concerned with policy and planning, work life quality and performance improvement.

There are some resonances in Ackoff’s proposals with the structure of the UCA, such as mutual accountability, and shared decision-making by consensus.

Ackoff’s internal market economy

Ackoff (1999, p. 211) asserted that “subsidized monopolies are generally insensitive and unresponsive to the users of their services”. The problem with centrally planned and controlled economies is that functions such as accounting, human resource management and information technology departments become subsidised monopolies. These functions are paid for by a “tax” on other income generating parts of the organisation.

He has argued that cost centres should operate as “profit” centres. Therefore cost centres ought to be allowed to buy services from wherever they get the best value for money, be that internal or external to the organisation, to

encourage subsidised monopolies to be more sensitive and responsive (Ackoff, 1999, p. 214). As a principle Ackoff (1999, p. 219) advocated for users of services to receive control of their services, either through vouchers or some other means, where the choice of service provider is placed in the hands of consumers, which would force service providers to compete for their business. For this to work in practice there needs to be clear guidelines, strong advocacy and the political will to make it happen (Rea, 1998, p. 207).

My understanding of this proposal from Ackoff is to create the buying and selling of services internal to an organisation in an attempt to encourage subsidised workers to take responsibility for their own viability, through quality service provision.

Ackoff's multidimensional organisational structure

Ackoff (1999, p. 225) observed that change can be disruptive and damaging to people and organisations. Therefore he has proposed a permanently structured multidimensional organisation.

The permanent dimensions of Ackoff's design (1999, p. 226) are functionally defined input units, service-defined output units, and user-defined units or markets. In UCQ internal functions can consist of human resource management, property and finance, and information technology. External services can be the actual programs of service offered in the community. Markets would refer to the people who use the services. Governments become a key stakeholder as funder of programs, whilst the UCA could be considered as an internal function concerning property and insurance.

With these three dimensions fixed, organisations can adjust the relative proportions of each to the other as required. However, if these three dimensions are embedded in every level of the organisation, all decisions become three dimensional. Hence this shifts the management focus from individual action, to interaction between people responsible for internal functions, external service and markets (Ackoff, 1999, p. 228).

The multidimensional approach encourages collaboration between the dimensions and the use of integrative power to maximise the potential of each. Again there are strong resonances with the UCA and its interrelated council model and shared leadership approach.

Summary

This chapter has explored at least four options for the relationship between the UCA and UCQ. The first, to leave things as they are, was dismissed because it did not address the questions of authenticity or congruence. The second option, to separate, seemed to be undesirable both financially and relationally. It may have been possible twenty years ago, but not now. The third option, for UCQ to adopt the structure of the UCA, did not seem to be practical in terms of worker expectations within a stratified workplace. The fourth option, to create a new way forward, was informed by the work of Limerick et al. and Ackoff. Limerick et al. seemed to suggest that an exploration of organic systems would be a creative way forward. Ackoff's approach of a social systemic organisation: an organisation that is democratic, that has an internal market economy, that has a multidimensional organisational structure, that uses interactive planning, and contains a decision support system; has much to commend itself to UCQ in its mission of witness and service, in the name of the UCA, in the community.

By creating a social systemic multidimensional organisation UCQ would be able to deeply listen to all stakeholders in the process of interactive planning, maximise the nutrient and integrative power of workers, create management-leadership partnerships, and encourage personal responsibility through the internal market economy and the multidimensional structure. UCQ would be adopting a congruent shared leadership and shared decision-making approach to that of the UCA. In so doing UCQ can anchor its identity in the UCA, thus strengthening authenticity and clarifying its relationship with other stakeholders.

Chapter 6: Conclusions

This essay has sought to explore the challenges that UCQ faces with respect to its authenticity and congruities. Because UCQ is embedded in the UCA, an exploration of the identity of the UCA was carried out in chapter one.

In chapter two the Uniting Church in Australia was found to be a theocratic faith community, which could be described as a type of democracy “anchored” in Christ, in whom people are called to faith, hope and love. Rather than governing by simple majority, following the whim of lobby groups or charismatic entrepreneurs; this anchored democracy focuses on the gospel, to discern the way forward in worship witness and service, together. This anchored democracy provides a structure where diversity is honoured and the dissenting minority is heard; where co-travellers remain open to reform as they seek the unity of peacemakers. From this foundation the identity of UCQ was explored in chapter two.

In chapter three the concept of authenticity was introduced to help explore the moral identity of UCQ. As a result, the identity of UCQ was found to be unclear; rather its identity appeared to be quite turbid. This turbidity came about from the competing claims of the UCA, the Governments as funders, the education and practices of the professions, the financial expectations of being in business, and the expectations of community. The result of this turbidity was that the authenticity of UCQ could be understood only in terms of its congruity with the above mentioned competing claims. However not all claims were of equal value. UCQ was seen to need to anchor itself firmly to the reference point of the mission of the UCA, in an endeavour to discern its identity, and by extension its authenticity, in an applied ethics dialogue with Government, the professions, business, and the community.

Because UCQ is in a working relationship with many stakeholders, which created turbidity of identity; chapter four explored the congruity between UCQ and the UCA.

Chapter four showed that UCQ can be a congruent expression of the mission and message of the UCA, through witness and service. However, the hierarchical structure of UCQ and the "distance" that UCQ programs are from congregations, are incongruent expressions of the beliefs of the UCA. These incongruities cloud the identity of UCQ and impact upon its authenticity, which in turn affects UCQ's relationships with other stakeholders

Finally, chapter five explored four possible options of organisational structure, to discern for a way forward together for UCQ and the UCA; to meet the challenges of delivering church-sponsored community services authentically and congruently. It was found that by creating a social systemic multidimensional organisation, UCQ would be able to deeply listen to all stakeholders in the process of interactive planning, maximise the nutrient and integrative power of workers, create management-leadership partnerships, and encourage personal responsibility through the internal market economy and the multidimensional structure. UCQ would be adopting a shared leadership and shared decision-making approach congruent to that of the UCA. In so doing UCQ can anchor its identity in the UCA, thus strengthening authenticity and clarifying its relationship with other stakeholders.

There are a number of areas of inquiry that now emerge from this research. There are two that I will pursue. The first is leadership, as it relates to shared leadership; and the second is decision-making processes, as it relates to shared decision-making. The following are some questions that could be explored further. What are the styles of leadership that are promoted and modelled in the UCA and are they consistent with the mission and values of the UCA? What are the styles of leadership that are promoted and modelled in UCQ and are they consistent with the mission and values of UCQ? Are the styles of leadership in the UCA and UCQ congruent with each other?

Another research project would inquire into ethical decision-making processes and explore how these are implemented in the UCA and UCQ. The following

questions could be explored. What are the decision-making processes of the UCA and UCQ? Are they consistent with their stated mission and values? Are the decision-making processes congruent with structures and governance?
Are the decision-making processes congruent with the leadership styles of UCQ and the UCA?

These questions on leadership and ethical decision-making processes will be explored in the second and third written projects of this professional doctorate research.

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